

Volume II, Number I • Autumn 1980 • \$4.00

# ARCHETYPE

A Magazine of Architecture and other Arts



*Barragan: a new house, a prize, and an interview*



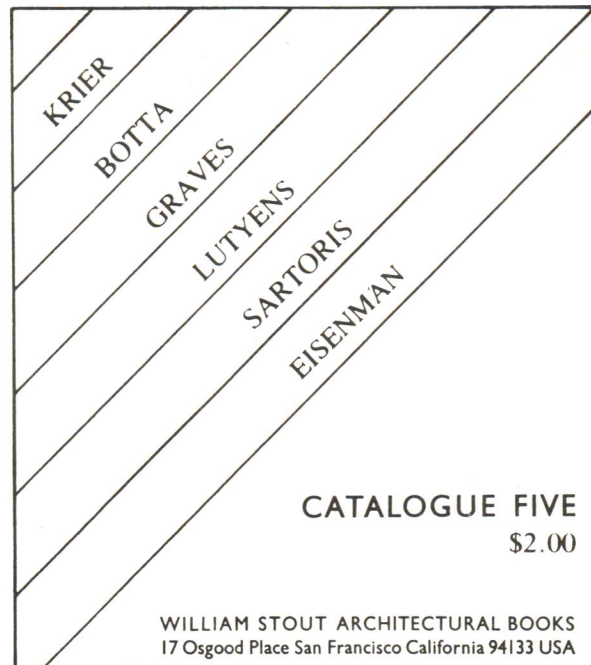
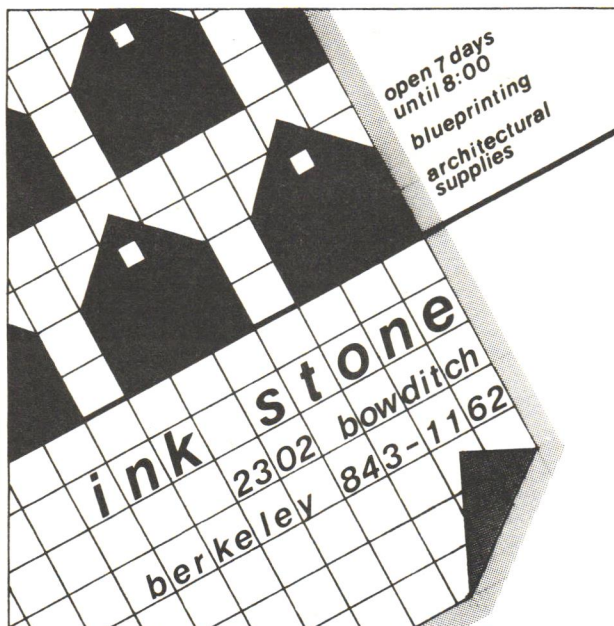
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by Donald Appleyard

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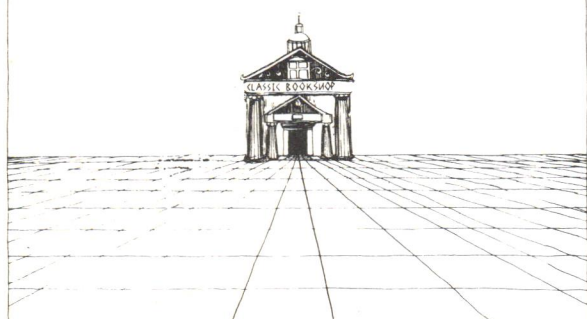
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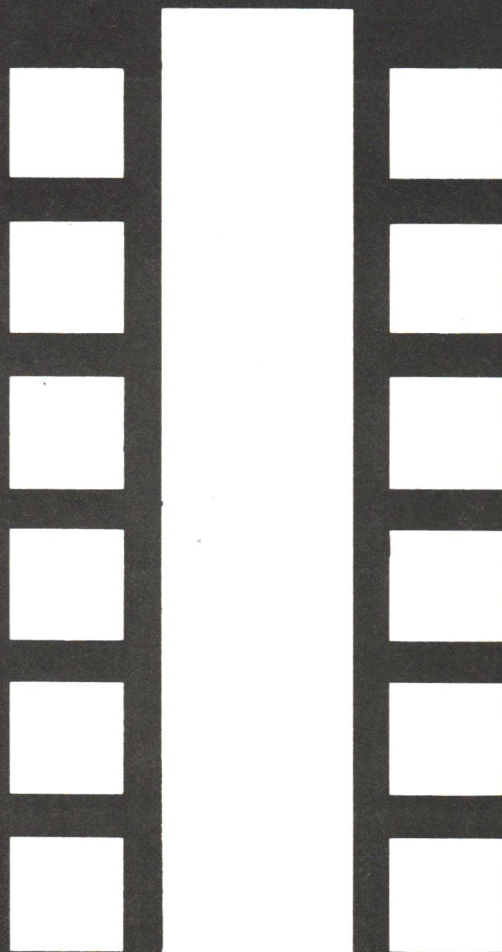


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PREHISTORIC  
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IN THE EASTERN  
UNITED STATES

by William Morgan

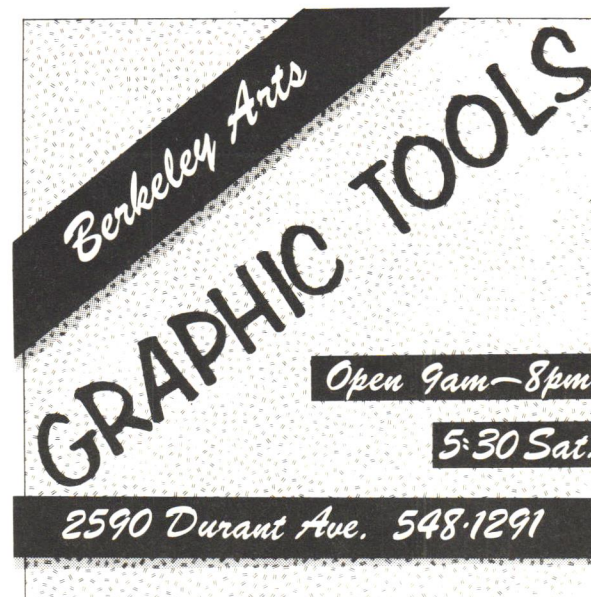
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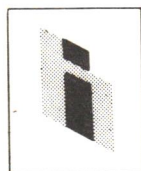
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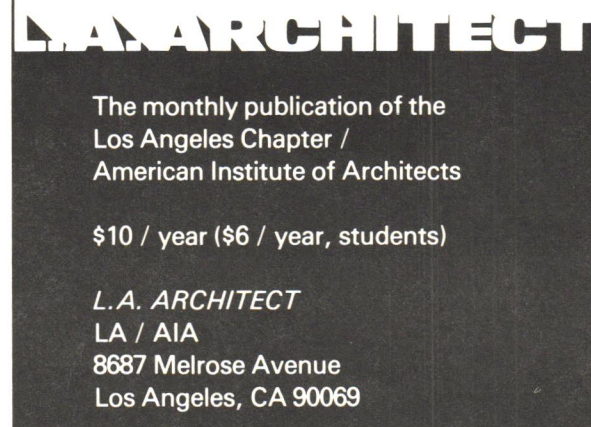
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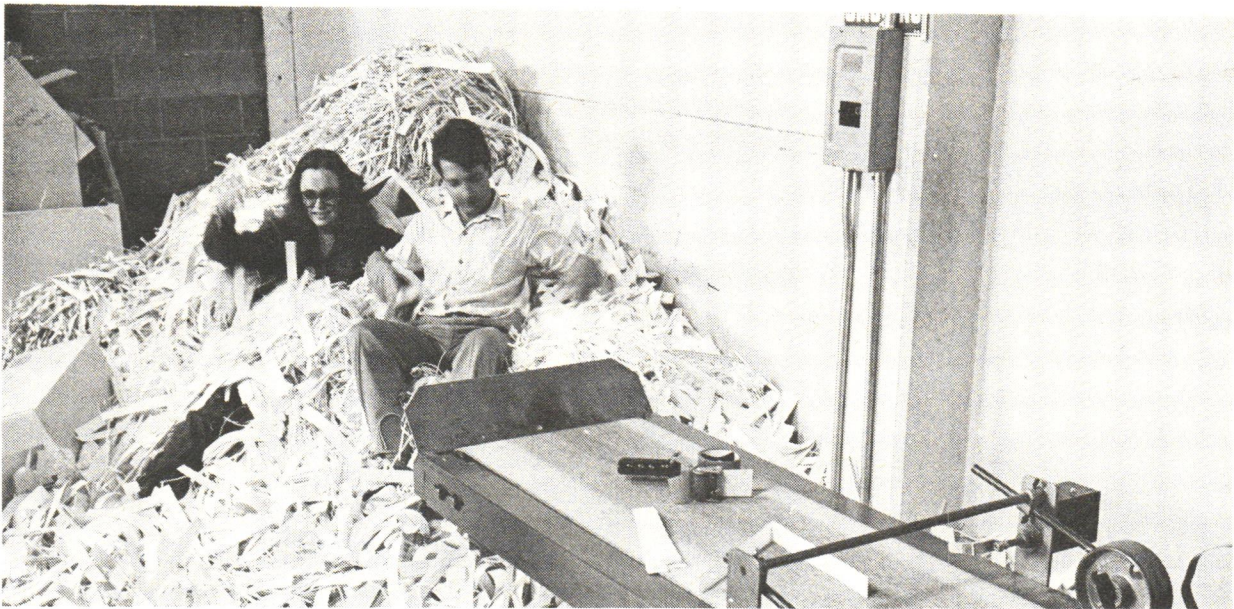
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# ARCHETYPE

Volume II, Number I • Autumn 1980

Save a branch. Our new, larger format doesn't waste paper the way the old one did. The editors, buried above, are obscured by waste paper from issue IV.



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Cover: Corridor in Barragan's Gilardi House.  
Photo by Jorge Salvat.

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### A Note on the Type

Archetype is set in Plantin types by Laura Gest Winder of Gestype and her dog Nameless. Plantin was released in 1914 by the Monotype Corporation and is named after the famous Antwerp printer, Christophe Plantin. Although Plantin never seems to have used these types they belong to his generation, being found at Frankfurt and at Basle about 1570.

## From the Editors

This year belongs to Barragan. Lionized by the popular press (from *Architectural Digest* to *Newsweek*) and winner of the Pritzker Prize, he is canonical copy-book material. He believes that everything has been said that can be said about his work and, because he is a man of few words, this is understandable. But our interview by the Spanish architect, Jorge Salvat, captures Barragan's spirit better than anything available. Salvat likewise caught the quality of his architecture in his most recent built work, the Gilardi House in Mexico City. The house is quintessential Barragan. A townhouse with an interior courtyard, it embodies all of Barragan's favorite devices: the dramatic use of multi-colored walls, the manipulation of natural light, the elimination of extraneous detail and decoration, and the juxtaposition of water and structure.

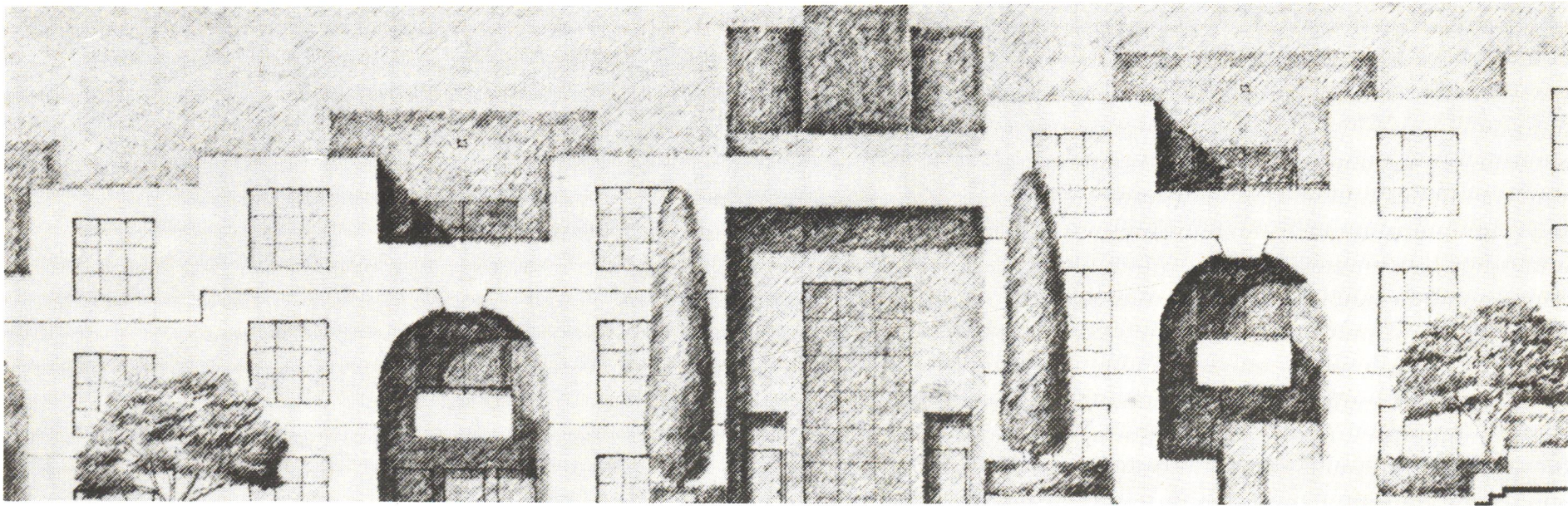
Barragan's legacy is a handful of great young Mexican architects like Ricardo Legorretta, Andres Casillas, Jose Yturbe, a handful of exquisite buildings and a hint of what he could have done in North America in collaborating with Louis Kahn at the Salk Institute and Kimbell Museum. One hopes that today's directionless architects will profit from a closer look at Barragan's unique and important contributions.

Published for the first time, we feature Barragan's Pritzker Prize acceptance speech. If the magazine seems to be in the form of *festschrift* it is intentional. Work of this quality deserves to be published as widely as possible irregardless of the skewed focus on one man.

Albert Speer, Hitler's masterbuilder, is another kettle of fish. We publish his work for its historical importance and because this sort of analysis has been ignored for political reasons until quite recently. It's not that fascist architecture is now fashionable, but this information is important in redressing Post-War revisionist history. To contrast his mega-plan with his modest house adds a bit of perspective.

William Wurster is still a Bay Area presence in architecture, but his reputation has ebbed every year since his death. It is time, however, to take another look at his earlier work since these tough modernist designs earned him his early reputation. Perhaps such reassessments of this architect's work will turn the tide.





Dan Solomon, *Fillmore Mews Project*.

Drawing by Paulett Taggart

## NEWS AND REVIEWS

Although we've changed the title, *Archetype's* news column continues with this issue. "News and Reviews" publishes reviews of current art, photography, design and architectural exhibits. Comments on new architectural projects, controversies and just 'talk of the town' are also newsworthy.

Since one of our objectives is to create an international cultural exchange, we invite you to contribute to "News and Reviews." Material should be written in a light, discursive manner and should inform our readers of current happenings in art and architecture, or of controversial projects. Submissions should be no longer than 500 words and/or enclose no more than one pictorial image.

Direct material to "News and Reviews" editor, Demetra Bowles, c/o ARCHETYPE, 84 Vandewater Street, San Francisco, CA 94133.

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### SHOWS

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#### Part or Parcel City Segments

William T. Georgis

"City Segments" is an exhibition curated by Mildred Friedman which originated at the Walker Arts Center, Minneapolis in April of 1980.<sup>1</sup> It addresses recent developments in urban design and architectural depiction. Ideas about the city are expressed in drawings by an international selection of thirty architects and planners. And different modes of architectural depiction are explained to assist the layman in understanding this important part of architectural conceptualization. It is a show of works in which each participant has delineated what he or she feels is a relevant urban issue. This affords an incredibly heterogenous show unbridled by contrived curatorial programs. The strength of the show, therefore, lies in the diversity of projects exhibited. These range from projects which can and will be built, to visionary schemes and artistic projects which can only exist in two dimensions.

Outstanding buildable schemes were submitted by Daniel Solomon and Steven Peterson. Solomon combines condominium housing and neighborhood stores in his San Francisco Fillmore Mews project while responding to existing urban fabric with extreme sensitivity. The Fillmore Mews aims to revive a once bustling neighborhood commercial strip, and contextually to bridge a gap created by urban renewal while providing much needed moderate income housing. Steven Peterson's project for Stratton Ski Town in Vermont, conversely, is an essay in creating urban fabric at an undeveloped mountain site. Unlike some insensitive resort developments which expand willy nilly, destroying the surrounding landscape, Peterson establishes a general development plan which aims to concentrate growth. Housing and resort buildings are disposed about streets, squares and public commons—these elements being the constituents of traditional New England towns which Peterson feels are still culturally understood.

The second type of project exhibited is visionary: the most striking example being Emilio Ambasz's Cooperative of Mexican-American Grape Growers for California. This is a conceptual complex of maze-like hedges and grape arbors situated in the

desert land of the Central Valley. The project is to be implemented in four stages of migrations to the site. Each influx of a different social group affects change to the whimsical scheme. Architecture is comprised of hedges and arbors which, by changing, function as a social and political barometer. The end result is a return to "Arcadia" where "all walls wither away and. . . man will be able to live in peace under a vineyard's shade and off its generous grapes."<sup>2</sup> Leon and Rob Krier also exhibit visionary projects. Theirs, however, are Rationalist and attempt to reconcile modern development with existing urban fabric in old European cities.

The final type of project is artistic and unbuildable, yet still effectively comments on urbanism and architecture. Andrew MacNair's series of abstract pastel drawings entitled *The New York Street* explore the role of the street in the city and the professional and paper practice of architecture. Thomas Beeby delineates the development of the city through the metaphor of the seasons. His statement is a personal one commenting on the determinants of urban form throughout recorded history.

The diversity of recent projects is supplemented by works from the 1960s and early 1970s by Friedrich St. Florian, O.M. Ungers and Arata Isozaki. Thus the exhibition imbues the viewer with a sense of urban history which allows him to greater appreciate recent urban developments. Projects also vary radically in scale: from the restructuring of Venice by Raimund Abraham, and creation of a subway by Robert Stern, to the exploration of the highway interchange by Leon Krier. At all times the viewer feels he is experiencing a multifarious sampling in which projects all may not cohere, but do contribute to an understanding of relevant urban concerns and solutions to urban problems.

#### Exhibition Travel Schedule:

Fort Worth Art Museum

August 31-October 12, 1980.

Blaffer Gallery, University of Houston

November 9-December 21, 1980.

Neuberger Museum, College at Purchase

State University of New York

January 18-March 15, 1981.

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

January 7-March 7, 1982.

<sup>1</sup>The exhibition was seen by this critic at the Chicago Public Library Cultural Center (78 East Washington Street). The Public Library building, designed by Shepley, Rutan, and Coolidge, was considered for demolition but was saved and rededicated as a cultural center three years ago. The center schedules thirty-five to forty free exhibitions per year and also administers an active public program of lectures, classes and film showings. "City Segments" was the first scheduled major architectural exhibition, among others being considered for the future.

<sup>2</sup>Emilio Ambasz, *Design Quarterly*, Nos. 113-114, p. 26. The exhibition catalogue is numbers 113-114 of *Design Quarterly* and is available through: Walker Art Center/Vineland Place/Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403, for \$5.00.

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#### A Participant's View of City Segments

Daniel Solomon

I used to think that this was a crummy time in which to be an architect—that irony and anti-heroism

are fine, but that naive optimism produced better buildings; and that whatever our generation would manage to construct would never amount to much.

The Walker Art Center exhibition entitled "City Segments," and more particularly the symposium that accompanied its opening are the kinds of events that alter our perceptions, perhaps deceptively, that it may not be such a crummy time after all—that 30 years from now when we have all shot our little wads, the world may be a bit different—and we may have made a contribution of some sort.

The heartening aspect of "City Segments" was the consensus on 'Great Questions' among a fairly disparate group of people. If there is substance in the theory which argues that the images of Radiant City ingrained in a generation of architects, planners and bureaucrats by their schooling affected the character of post-war building, then "City Segments" shows that changes are underway. All of the architects who participated in the "City Segments" symposium teach at major schools (Baird, Beeby, Frampton, Peterson, Stern, and myself) and all of us spout some version of the Colin Rowe, Brothers Krier line. The critics in the symposium (Suzanne Stephens, John Pastier, Paul Gap) also frequently involved with schools, held similar views.

It is quite an experience to be with a group of bright and talented colleagues and to discover that the entire group of bright and talented colleagues and to discover that the entire group actually has compatible Beliefs. All of us are interested in conceiving buildings which will reconstruct the public domain of towns destroyed in the post-war period. Frampton may call Stern's images kitsch, and Stern may object to Frampton's "dreary European courtyards." But 'faculty meeting' bitchiness aside, there is profound agreement.

Steven Peterson showed a plan—his winning entry in the Les Halles competition—which is purely polemical. Like most polemical plans, it has elements of deliberate naivete and unreality. It is as if one took a site plan produced in a Harvard Urban Design studio in 1960, and made a negative of it and then printed the negative as the plan. Peterson knows perfectly well that buildings shaped entirely by their surrounding public spaces will have unresolvable construction problems, difficulties with lighting, parking, fire exits, and so on. The essence of his polemic, however, is not that we should now make lightless rooms and forget about detailing, but that the diagram of daylight and the mystique of repetitive production, as the most important forces in-forming buildings, is now absolutely dead. Our generation of architects will not tear apart towns with buildings made by the inexorable will of the epoch.

The talk which crystallized the attitude at the symposium was Tom Beeby's. He showed two utopian visions of Chicago—Ludwig Hilbersheimer's and Daniel Burnham's. He didn't have to say much. The Hilbersheimer plan so clearly personifies discredited dreams—the long high-rise slabs avoiding air-brushed swatches of Chicago's smoke (the evil of urbanism) like a diagram of anti-magnetism. And the Burnham plan—civilized, sublimely fake, and so reasonable as a starting point for the reconstruction of urban things.



# Chicago Tower Revisited Late Entries to the Chicago Tribune Competition

William T. Georgis

“Late Entries to the Tribune Competition” is an exhibition of sixty-eight solicited architectural drawings curated by Stuart Cohen, Rhona Hoffman and Stanley Tigerman, shown in Chicago at the Museum of Contemporary Art. The original Tribune Tower Competition, which this current exhibition harks back to, was held in 1922. The award-winning building by architects Howells and Hood was completed with historic deference to the gothic style. Some submissions to the 1922 competition, however, were decidedly ‘modern.’ The stylistic dipolarity of the entries and the final erection of a historically-conceived building became the *cause célèbre* of modernists interested in re-writing architectural history. Nonetheless, the original competition did document the transition which architecture was experiencing at the time.

The present exhibition builds upon this competition with late entries from 1980, reflecting the current moods in architecture from late Modernism, to Post-Modernism, and historicism. A major fault of the show lies in this conception. By reenacting the 1922 competition to curators perversely adopt the past political and aesthetic polemics to delineate by juxtaposition new attitudes. Since the 1920s the architectural community has upheld the modern submissions to the 1922 competition as opposed to the award-winning historicist design. By adopting the format of the 1922 competition, the curators invite stabs at the modernist stance. The show therefore is pervaded by a testy attitude toward modernism which currently is all too fashionable among architects. This attitude was encouraged by the conceptual program: the late entries will not be built and the projects for this reason tend to be humorous, cynical and nihilistic.

If the concept of the show is uninspiring, the bulk of the submissions are reprehensible. Eschewing conventional notions of architecture based on either urban or social contexts, many submissions extol the *image* of the tower. Perhaps the most obvious aspect of architecture to be developed by such an exhibition is the reconsideration of the skyscraper building type. But this is not even attempted. These shortcomings are partially a result of the program which assumes that projects will remain unbuilt, hence it becomes a kind of cotillion for current architectural frippery.

While the late entries may not succeed as believable architecture, they do succeed as artistic, iconographic and subversive images. Both Gaetano Pesce and Jorge Silvetti have submitted artistically conceived designs that consciously continue certain architectural practices. Pesce’s facade is completely covered with an accretion of deep sculptural relief which literally and figuratively alludes to the means of newspaper production, the nature of communication, and to freedom of the press. His employment of architectural sculpture to convey meaning recalls classical building iconography, but Pesce distorts the classical hierarchy of elements. Sculptural elements clash in abstract formations and disregard the underlying architectural structure in this post-baroque design. Silvetti, who is more interested in the typology of symbols, felicitously weds the office block to the column-skyscraper (with the assistance of consoles and set-backs) to create a potent and sumptuous image.

Laurence Booth and Eric Owen Moss exhibit buildings which truly communicate visually in the tradition of *architecture parlance*. Booth’s new gothic tower is bifurcated—one half sheathed in glass and the other in limestone. The architect feels that gothic architecture refers to the scholastic tradition and its skeletal nature still has significant value for providing illuminated interiors. Scholasticism and illumination becomes a metaphor for the free press. A more literal approach of creating a building to house a newspaper is taken by Eric Owen Moss who proposed a skyscraper in the form of a newspaper (complete with Doonesbury cartoons) trapped in an enormous hourglass which sits on chess pieces. The news is thus trapped in time and at the foundation of this is a game of chess. This incongruous assemblage can be read metaphorically: architectural trends and criticism are the pawns of time.

Self-consciousness is carried to extremes in subversive projects by Fred Koetter, Michael Franklin

Ross, Livesey/Rosenstein and an anonymous Japanese. Koetter and Ross assail modernism with unnecessary resolve. Gropius’s 1922 entry is bent out of shape by Koetter who believes in continuing (and distorting) a past tradition to spite modernists, who he feels disregarded the past. Ross’s project “Misplaced Mies,” in a similar fashion belittles modern architecture and depicts a crumbling glass box overgrown with Japanese temple forms and other less recognizable appendages. Perhaps a comment on Koetter and Ross’s type of submission was intended by Livesey/Rosenstein whose entry skyscraper has a ‘Playskool block’ base, topped by a baby-bottle. The entry most germane to the character of the exhibition was submitted by an anonymous Japanese designer. He seizes Adolf Loos’s 1922 entry (a tower in the form of a Doric column) and sheathes it with a condom.

Impotency and ineffectuality characterize this show and because of its obtuse nature it is inaccessible to the layman; nevertheless, it is a useful exhibition. In Volume I of its expensive catalogue (Rizzoli, \$30) it has provided a reprinting of all 1922 competition entries. But more importantly, it shows how architectural trends and history are created. In reacting to a set of values, the participants establish new ones which may become as tyrannical as those which they feel tyrannized them.

## Exhibition Travel Schedule:

LaJolla Museum of Contemporary Art  
September 12-October 12, 1980.

Aspen Center for the Visual Arts  
February 8-March 30, 1981.

Walker Art Center, Minneapolis  
April 12-May 31, 1981

Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven  
September 8-October 20, 1981.

Fort Worth Art Center  
November 7-December 13, 1981.

## La Biennale ’80, Venice

Bonnie Ott

Being an even one, this is a year for the Venice Biennale, an international exhibit of artists and architects. It is the first Biennale to exhibit architecture separately from art and in doing so, it has been raised to event status. (In architecture, this implies that more questions are raised than answered.)

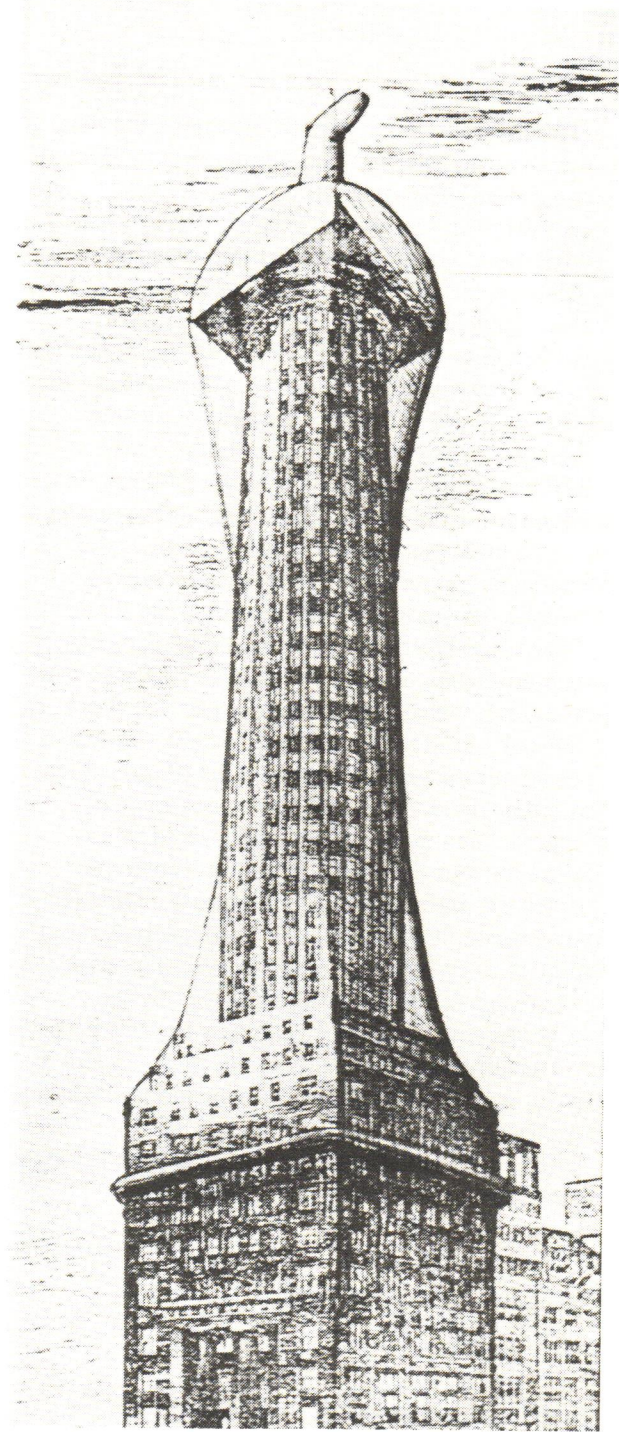
The exhibit is being touted as the First International Exhibition of Architecture, and well it may be for the invited exhibitors represent most of Western Europe, the U.S. and Japan; no precedent for such an occurrence comes easily to mind. It should be noted, however, that this is intended to be an exhibition of post-modernism—understandably so considering the principal organizers are Robert Stern, Charles Jencks, C. Norburg-Schultz, and Paolo Portoghesi, the Italian mentor of post-modernism.

The architecture exhibit is primarily housed in one section of the old Venice arsenal, a wonderful assemblage of brick walls and warehouses with enormous spaces that connect end on end to create a powerful axis.

Of the seventy exhibiting architects, twenty were asked to design a two-story facade segment as part of their exhibit. Beautifully constructed as movie sets by an army of cine città, the facades line up ten abreast and opposing, to frame a street of post-modernism. This street, dazzling and active, carefully constructed and finished, works in scale, diversity and articulation.

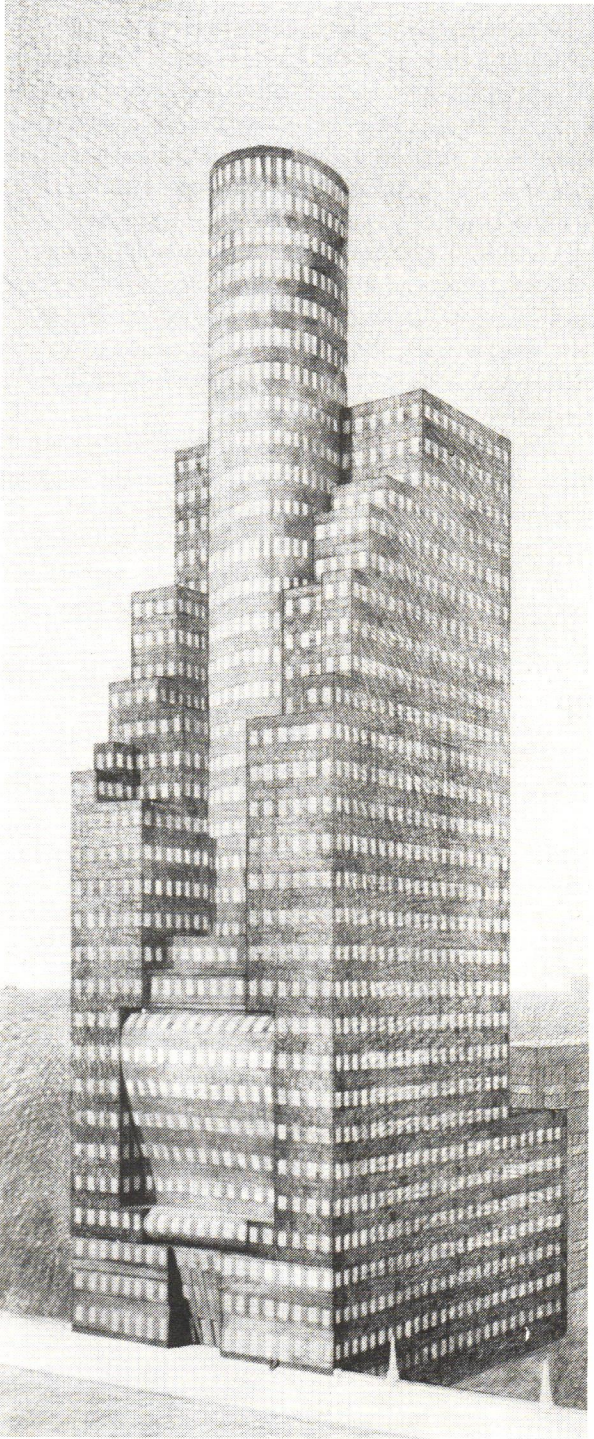
Entrances integrated into each facade at street level lead to the architect’s exhibited drawings and models. These downstairs or facade exhibitors include such post-modernist luminaries as Venturi, Moore, Hans Hollein, Graves, Tigerman, Stern, Krier, Koolhaas, Scolari, GRAU, Taller de Arquitectura, and some questionably post-modernists as Gehry, Isosaki and Ungers.

On the mezzanine floor directly above these street level exhibits, the work of the other exhibitors is generously displayed on long, free-standing panels. The American group includes Eugene Kupper, Stuart Cohen, Thomas Beeby, Andrew Batey, Mark Mack, Taft Architects, Richard Oliver, Helmut Jahn, Jorge Silvetti/Rudolfo Machado and Bill Turnbull. Susanna Torre, the only solo woman in the group of seventy had no exhibit in place; however, her work is represented in the elegant



The Bridegroom Packed Innocent by His Spinsters, Even.  
An Anonymous Japanese Entry.

Jorge Silvetti, *Chicago Tribune Tower*





catalogue of the exhibit (eventually available, in English, at Bill Stout Books).

Aldo Rossi's work is displayed in two parts, both separated from the rest of the exhibit. In addition to a scaffolding and wood gate which marks the canal entrance to the exhibit, his floating theater (*Domus*) is moored on a barge across the Grand Canal. Installed in this extraordinary structure which inverts the conventional relationship between scaffolding and surface, are Rossi's drawings and sketches. Back in the Arsenale, Jencks playfully mimicked Rossi's theater by constructing a giant pencil, reminiscent in silhouette, and formed of the same pine boards and blue paint as the theater.

Among the more notable exceptions to the exhibitors were Mario Botta and Jim Stirling. Both declined invitations to exhibit, Stirling for reasons of time and Botta, though he was present at the opening, purportedly due to disagreement with either the post-modern premise or its restriction.

That the exhibit's intention was to document post-modernism, and yet encompassed a range from German rationalism to the literary and visual poetics of Silveti and Machado, calls the characteristics of a post-modernist into question. This would suggest that either the definition of post-modernism is adaptable enough to shift its emphasis to fit a context, or that post-modernism, in its own inclusiveness, embraces anything outside orthodox International Style modernism. Perhaps p-m could also be distinguished in terms of presentation or form as opposed to content, evidenced by the number of sumptuous drawings and cleverly developed installations. One is tempted, in the face of these apparant contradictions, to avoid classifications altogether.

The exhibit will display in Venice at least through September.

## Picasso in New York

Lois E. Nesbitt

"Picasso: A Retrospective," on view (22 May — 16 September) at the Museum of Modern Art, is an exhibit that makes a lot of promises. The show's promotional material reads like advertising copy, guaranteeing the biggest and best. Like its blockbuster predecessor, the King Tut show, this exhibit features works which have never before and will never again be seen in the United States. This rare and comprehensive amassment of works covering the seventy-eight years of the artist's career gives the show its 'once in a lifetime' quality which will draw even the culturally over-exposed to the Modern's mid-town chambers. Not surprisingly, most will leave satisfied with their momentous tour of Picasso's life and work—still reeling from the grand hoop-la a la Ringling Brothers which urged them 'to come see one of the greatest shows on earth'—and nodding yes, that the exhibit did keep its promises.

Unfortunately, "Picasso: A Retrospective" is too large a production for any museum to handle facilely. The Modern has tried hard, opening the entire museum to the show and coordinating an elaborate crowd-flow system. But logistics interfere regardless. Purchasing admission for a specific day and time (at

Ticketron outlets) puts obvious and regrettable constraints on how and when one looks at the art. Likewise, the enjoyment of actually viewing the show is disrupted by the absurd number of viewers allowed in the building at any given time. You may not necessarily see all 758 works in the show, but you *can* be sure of seeing several thousand fellow museum-goers making criss-cross patterns across your line of vision.

Yet, despite the obstacles the exhibit is unquestionably worth seeing. Local art lovers have the luxury of seeing the exhibit as it should be seen—in several unhurried visits. Fighting the crowds can be exhausting; absorbing a museum full of Picassos definitely is.

Picasso is widely acclaimed as the greatest artist of this century. Art historians are fond of listing the many styles and trends that he initiated. Seen from this viewpoint, Picasso will be remembered for laying the groundwork for much of modern art. This aspect of Picasso as pioneering artist is important. yet it is also a limited perspective since it only can be shared by artists, critics, and art historians who are well-versed in the artist's entire work. A show like "Picasso: A Retrospective," however reaches out to the general public and offers them a similar overview on this 20th century master. The elite art world long ago accepted and praised Picasso's genius; the Modern's exhibit now provides a chance for a broader audience to study, reflect upon, and to comprehend the total oeuvre of this artist.

In laying out the exhibition, curators William Rubin and Dominique Bozo took a "hand's off approach"—organizing the work chronologically with little didactic labeling. The catalogue, which includes reproductions of *all* the works with practically no text, also encourages *looking*. The curators have thus left the discovery, and exploration, of Picasso's art to the viewer. The approach is successful, for Picasso was not by nature an art historian's artist, not one to be easily filed away under any stylistic category. Picasso was a man driven by forces and passions common to all men; his art is the visualization of these forces.

Much of the work in the show is 'ugly.' Picasso created out of compulsion, out of passion and explosive energy. In a century in which many artists were pressured to produce something New or avant-garde, Picasso's approach to art was almost primitive, rooted in man's primal urges. Even while he discovered innovative uses of color and form, he never lost touch with the fundamental fascination of making art. His compositions are a constant investigation of the process by which the line, the scratch, or the scribble becomes something meaningful, an image that communicates.

Though his style and technique may have been ahead of (or outside of) his time, the significance of his art is timeless. Picasso's art is not about industry, mass production, or modern 'progress,' but about anger, serenity, beauty, ugliness, love, sex, war, and death—about the primal drives as well as the emotional ecstasy and suffering of thinking man. He is unique among twentieth century artists in that the human form remained the dominant image in all phases of his career. The vocabulary of human anatomy, became the language for his expression of human themes.

He was an artist of unlimited scope. The exhibit in its chronological overview, most strikingly displays the variety of approaches he explored. His first student sketches of torsos establish Picasso's excellent draftsmanship. The moody figures of the Blue and Rose periods reveal his early manipulation of color and form as means of expression. Later, in "Woman with a Comb," (1906), Picasso delves into the past, experimenting with classical figural representation and creating a surface resembling a faded fresco. The shift from "Two Nudes," painted in the same year, to "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon" shows Picasso's breakthrough from expressive naturalism to a new way of seeing. The angular bodies and collapsible space of "Les Demoiselles" mark the beginning of Cubism. The awkward, disjointed body in "Bather" (1908-09) is an attempt to use the Cubist style to depict a figure seen from several viewpoints at once. Though Cubism's importance within Picasso's oeuvre is much disputed, he nonetheless makes use of Cubist techniques from this point onward. It appears in the colorful still-lives and minimal collages of Synthetic Cubism in the late 1910s and in his costumes for the Diaghilev ballet "Parade." Picasso repeatedly experimented

with translating Cubism's juxtaposed planes into three-dimensions: in 1912 he created "Guitar" from wire and sheet metal; in 1961 he used similar materials to construct "The Chair."

The late 1910s saw Picasso's return to a classical figural style, which he then developed while working with Diaghilev's Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in Rome. The figures of this period have a massiveness, a weighty grandeur reminiscent of Roman art. The fingers of the figure in "Seated Woman" (1920) for instance, swell to exaggerated proportions; the two figures in "Women Running on the Beach" (1922) are amazingly fleet of foot despite their cumbersome masses.

Some of the most humorous and insightful forms are the contorted anatomies in the beach scenes of the 1920s and '30s. In "Bathers with Beach Ball" (1928) the arms and torsos of the figures become elongated triangles stretching toward the ball. The bodies of love-making couples in "Figures by the Sea" (1931) are lost in a jumbled heap of schematized limbs, breasts, and buttocks.

Picasso's work from the late 1930s to his death in 1973 is generally considered inferior to the earlier work. The exhibition helps emphasize, however, that the problem with the late work was not that Picasso was artistically exhausted, but that he was trying to synthesize the many disparate elements of his earlier explorations into unified compositions. "Seated Woman in Garden" (1938) is a motley assortment of previous styles: Cubist wedges of color, surreal displacement of features and anatomy, naturalistic foliage, and painted-in textures (wood, rope) suggesting the collages. The painting makes little sense—in trying to see everything, Picasso has said nothing.

There are, however, several powerful works from these years. "The Charnel House" (1945), an uncompleted work, is more disturbing and evocative than its predecessor "Guernica" (1937). In "Guernica" Picasso uses an elaborate repertoire of forms and symbols to depict the horrors of war. In "The Charnel House," he manipulates a tangle of human forms, piled under a table, to create an image more direct, more frightening, and more inescapably human.

A final painting, "The Women of Algiers," (1955), was the subject of a lengthy and eloquent essay by Leo Steinberg.<sup>1</sup> Steinberg sees the work (done after a painting by Delacroix) as a successful result of Picasso's struggle to fuse the various strands of his artistic investigations. The painting, located in the last section of the exhibit, is perhaps a fitting place to end. In the work Picasso combines the two poles of his stylistic development, Cubist abstraction and naturalism. It conveys a favorite theme—human figures constrained within the 'architecture' of society. The odalisque in the rear stretches to fill a rectangular doorframe; the reclining figure on the right kicks her legs out into the encroaching space. The vitality of living forms and the frustration of societal restraints is but one of the persistent and decipherable themes in Picasso's art. "Picasso: A Retrospective" proves that Picasso's work is truly timeless and eternally powerful.

<sup>1</sup>Leo Steinberg, "The Algerian Women and Picasso At Large," *Other Criteria*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp. 125-234.

## Practice and Pedagogy

Lois E. Nesbitt

From the moment of its conception, "Architecture: Practice and Pedagogy" was an in-crowd affair. The exhibit, on display through September 21 at the National Academy of Design in New York, illustrates the work of seventeen young architects (aged 27 to 40) who teach at design schools in the north-eastern United States.

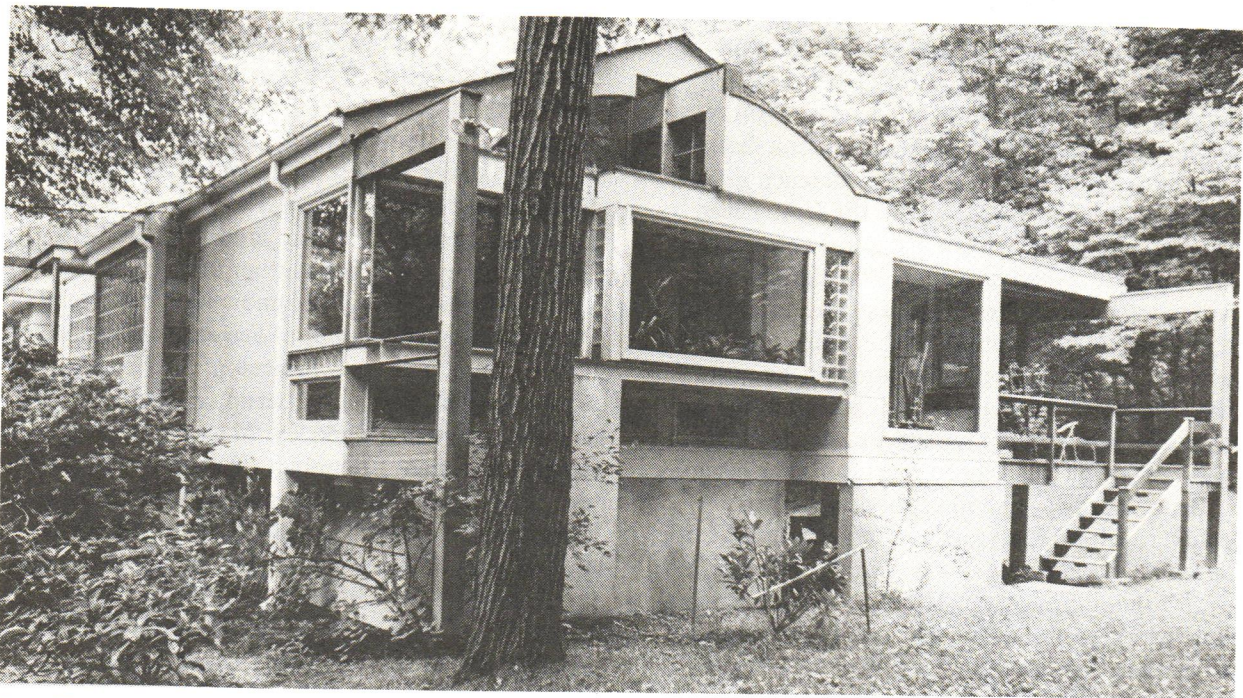
The exhibit was not designed for the general public—few not trained in the practice and/or history of architecture could glean much from a casual perusal of the presentations. Despite the numerous drawings, photographs, models, and written texts, it takes quite a bit of mental application and extrapolation to envision many of the projects.

Invitations to submit work were sent to twenty-two schools, and the projects shown were drawn from a pool of forty applicants. The selection process, carried out by an independent jury, was not anonymous. And in fact, with architectural



Bather with Beach Ball, 1932. Museum of Modern Art New York





Peter Waldman, *Kosinski Addition*, Princeton, New Jersey.

Peter Waldman

insiders such as Michael Dennis and Robert Stern on the jury, anonymity would probably have been impossible, anyway. Randal Korman, the curator, acknowledges the clubbiness of the procedure: “We knew what would happen—who was teaching and who was doing interesting work.”

The architects chosen represent most of the major architecture schools in the northeast—the Ivy Leagues, the various design schools, UVA, and Syracuse. Conspicuously absent are Yale, the University of Pennsylvania, and MIT. Among those present, certain biases are evident: three of the fifteen are from Syracuse University (where Korman teaches and where the show was first hung); one-third are from New York City.

Despite limitations and imbalances, the exhibit remains interesting and revealing. But the show was *not* about the process of teaching architecture. Though each architect includes samplings of his student’s work, the works come from a range of levels (from basic design assignments to theses projects) which allows no basis for comparison. Nor does the show convey (or attempt to convey) the “approach” of the various schools to teaching and to design.

What the show *is* about are the influences and interactions which comprise a certain architectural network within specific generational and geographic boundaries. A glance at the education and teaching experience of each architect (provided with each presentation) reveals this ingrowth and helps distinguish what is derivative from what is innovative in the work of each designer. Perhaps the most conspicuous influences are those of the Princeton gurus. Peter Waldman, a Princeton man since his freshman year, displays a Graves-ian use of beams-framing-space in his addition for the Kosinki house. Tod Williams’s series of houses with and without walls and roofs is like an Eisenmanian graphic permutation translated into three dimensions.

On a broader scale, the presentations reflect architecture in a time of flux and of change. The ‘incomplete’ look of many of the works, the over- and understatement and inner contradictions, reveals new exploration into architecture’s potential. In designing buildings heretical to Modernist principles, these architects go beyond the aesthetic experimentation of Post-Modernism. The “false walls” of Williams’s houses are not flippant Dada statements, but inquiries into the nature and function of walls.

Perhaps the strongest current in this movement is the verbal and visual allusion to history. Edward Levin (Syracuse) designed an American Standard Home (for the plumbing fixtures company) based on projects by Ledoux and Jefferson. Waldman’s Mayer House employs columns and arches from Antiquity, as well as a Schinkelian Neo-Classic massing of forms. He revitalizes the old motifs through juxtaposition and asymetry. Other designers use the past in the literal sense—rennovating barns, old houses, and Manhattan lofts.

Also architecturally *au curreant* is Susana Torre’s use of symbolism. Torre, the only woman represented in the show, presented a design which doubled as a feminist statement. The design was dedicated to Mary Mahoney, who apparently did much of the work credited to her architect/husband Walter Burley Griffin (a disciple of Wright). Torre’s design refers both to woman’s place in society and to female anatomy. Not unlike Judy Chicago’s

“Dinner Party,” Torre payed ambiguous homage to Mahoney’s accomplishments by designing a pink marble structure focusing on elements (such as doorways and ‘caves’) loaded with sexual implications.

Arthur McDonald (Syracuse) created a Miesian living room, complete with carefully arranged furniture and a long glass window/wall. Werner Goehner (Columbia University) tacked a Miesian glass-walled addition onto the Karlsruhe Museum to investigate the effect of juxtaposing the old and not-so-old. Numerous designs employ Corbusian *pilotis* and long, curved walls. Michael Wurmfeld (Cooper Union) retained the remnants of Modernism’s social theories. He made no Utopian claims, but does see architecture as a process involved with social change. His attitude, as well as his selection of projects (including a design for a mental health clinic in Harlem) contribute a much-needed dose of social awareness to this basically elitist/intellectual grouping.

Aesthetically, the exhibit is rewarding. Particularly beautiful are Jon Michael Schwarting’s (Columbia) drawings on brown wrapping paper and Tim Wood’s (Columbia) serene and delicate elevations of a rennovated house in Bridgehampton.

The future of “Architects: Practice and Pedagogy” after its New York showing is uncertain. Korman originally envisioned the exhibit travelling around the country, picking up new architects in each region.

## Student Drawings at the Philippe Bonnafont Gallery

*William Stout*

The summer show “Works on Paper by Recent Graduates from Schools of Architecture” at the Philippe Bonnafont Gallery in San Francisco exhibits the drawings of recently graudated architects from the West Coast. This assemblage of architects’ drawings seems to point to a move in architecture toward leaving the drawing board and becoming a professional artist. The drawings are highly professional, but so technical that little is left to the viewer’s imagination. Many of the works in the show are drawn from recent European travel experiences, and emphasize such formal concepts as space and color. The show fails, however, in that it does not transcend this formal preoccupation to demonstrate the greater notion of how these European ‘travelogues’ relate to earch artist’s architecturally-related work. Further, this handicap reveals itself most pointedly in the lack of imagination in these drawings. This criticism holds true for all the displayed works with the exception of Fran Violich’s drawings, Jessica Seaton’s watercolors, and Nasser Ahaki’s clay models.

Briefly, Fran Violich’s Los Nevadas Cemetery with its building-frame placed over a Western Cemetery must be extolled as a poetic and thought-provoking image. The transparency of his white glazes over existing images adds to the mystery and history of the cemetery. Jessica Seaton’s pieces are developed around images based on the integration of landscape and architectural elements, landscape types. Her drawings reflect historical typologies such as the walled entryway to Palladio’s Villa

Rotunda, and the use of trees forming walls to define space recalls a similar tree-framed Parisian boulevard. It is difficult to see what these landscape types mean in her own work, but once again this is one of the overriding shortcomings of the entire exhibition. And finally, Masser Ahaki’s clay models resemble archeologic site studies. The proportion and placement of door openings on the clay walls are inspirational.

The influence of Simond’s, O.M. Ungers, and the Kriers on this show’s participants certainly can be seen.

It is clear to me from this show that architects should not attempt to celebrate the art of drawing until they have developed clear ideas about the art of architecture. Drawing, after all, should be a means for expressing ideas and not vice versa.

## CONFERENCES

### . . .In Search of a Forum: Commentary and Criticism

*Richard Rose*

Spring Colloquium and Round Table  
Design in the 1980s  
Oklahoma State University

Participants: James Marston Fitch-Architect, Historian, Critic, Author. Helmut Jahn-Head of Design, C.F. Murphy Associates, Chicago. Dennis Walsh-President, Ellerbe Architects, Minneapolis. Gunnar Birkerts-Gunnar Birkerts Associates, Birmingham, Mich.

There I was, driving the 100 miles or so north from Norman, Oklahoma, where I teach (College of Environmental Design, University of Oklahoma), to Stillwater, Oklahoma to attend the Spring Colloquium entitled “Design in the 1980s.” In my mind, I was still going over the three lectures on a similar topic that had just taken place two weeks earlier at our School in Norman. Charles Jencks had given three incisive and witty lectures (on the glass box—‘the dumb box’; on Michael Graves’s new building in Portland—‘a sky lump’ as opposed to ‘scraper’) on European Contextualism, Late-Modernism, and Post-Modernism. As I drove past the cotton fields and red earth along the Interstate, I also thought about the colloquium’s keynote speaker, James Marston Fitch, the well-known historian and critic, and newly self-ordained post-modern killer (cf. *AIA Journal*, January 1980, “A Funny Thing Happened. . .”), an article-diatribes which gave Jencks a surprise. I too had problems with this article not only on ideological grounds, but with its lack of professional and ethical rigor. Fitch clearly would be riding the crest of a reactionary wave; but I naively hoped that he and the other participants would transcend this reaction to reveal their aspirations for the 1980s on such issues as: the new rationalist movement in Europe, energy, the future of the city, and the economic situation. I was looking to Helmut Jahn, the rising young superstar from Chicago, to insure that these issues were focused on. Lately there has been a tendency to look at many of these issues in isolated ‘tunnel-vision’ fashion. This allows some critics to dismiss post-modernism because many of its proponents have ignored the energy issue, or to dismiss the new rationalists as fascist, etc., thus ignoring one of the richest form and symbol-giving methodology in history. Fitch called post-modern ideology a “. . .prison house of antique gesture. . .” thereby allowing another generation of architects to perpetuate an architectural typology of monuments.

Early in his talk, Fitch acknowledged the failure of certain aspects of the modern movement, but we were left in the dark as to what they were, save one: the collapse of several large roof structures in recent years, singling out the Kemper Arena (not seeming to know that Helmut Jahn was the architect for that project).

I kept hoping throughout the day that Fitch would end his invective and move on to the other issues facing us in the 1980s. All that was ever mentioned was the energy issue. His presentation was completely pessimistic and in a manner fitting the rest of his presentation, he ended his commentary with references to Michael Graves as “. . .our colleague from Princeton, who’s name I can never remember, and probably shouldn’t remember for purposes of libel. . . .” This comment was followed



by a slide of Graves's sketches for furniture designs, with Fitch claiming that "these are drawings I think that you wouldn't. . . I wouldn't excuse in a junior high school vocational class." It is disheartening to hear a critic of such stature stoop to this petty commentary.

Immediately following Fitch's talk, Helmut Jahn modified his intended introduction to his presentation by offering a brief rebuttle. The architects of the post-modern movement add layers of meaning to their work and that this layering is not empty he explained, but a search for a more meaningful architecture of the future. Jahn was the only panel member to offer any insights into the future of architecture in responding to Fitch and by showing a series of new projects. The new Xerox Center in Chicago showed some of his concerns for the revitalization of our cities and their downtowns: the development of commercial shopping facilities at grade, the development of a passive solar design for the skin of the building, and the recognition of the corner (long an architectural tradition in Chicago) by curving the building in response to it.

Helmut Jahn was followed by Dennis Walsh, and I felt for the next hour as if I were in a recruiting session for Ellerbe Architects. Flashing through several hundred slides in exceptionally fast order, Walsh seemed intent on impressing us with the quantity of work. To Walsh's credit, I must admit that he did say that the architecture of the 1980s will return to the city—alas, but he was just giving a market projection, not an ideological one!

The presentation by Gunnar Birkerts was a simple display of his past works without any projection for the future other than the energy issue. He claimed, on a more philosophical level, that the great masters worked, as he does, intuitively and that they did not consciously borrow from the past to build up layers of meaning. This is a negation of much that is known to us of past masters, but it allowed him to discredit the post-modern movement for self-conscious historicizing.

It is significant to note that all of the panel's members, save Helmut Jahn, dealt with the work of the 1970s. There was nothing said about the future of architecture.

## Stanford University Conference on Design

John Gittelsohn

The Stanford University Conference on Design (July 24-26) attracted over 150 architects, graphic artists, industrial engineers, interior decorators, teachers, students, and a family (the Jeans of Costa Mesa, California) for an intensive seminar dealing with the many subjects that fall under this uncertain rubric. The conference lacked a definite focus, in part because design itself has become a vague and nebulous term. If any common thread emerged before the closing champagne party, it was that designers are individuals seeking individual solutions to individual problems.

Seventeen speakers, ranging from high-fashion clothiers to nuclear fusion plant planners, discussed personal histories, jobs, and philosophies of design. Their trades and tools varied, but the major influences boiled down to tradition, technology, and intuition.

Jack Stauffacher, a San Francisco typographer and publisher, described the process of designing a version of Plato's *Phaedrus* using hand-set type. He asserted that this slow, laborious process offered the freedom to experiment with layout in order to establish the ideal relationship between the page and the flow of the dialogue. Only by rearranging the text piece by piece can a bookmaker arrive at the suitable solution which expresses the traditional ideas of this work.

In opposition to this approach, Aaron Marcus of Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory advocated computer graphics as the future pens and brushes of graphic artists. Technology already offers the flexibility and image resolution creative artists have sought for centuries, Marcus argued. He believes that artists should master computer image making techniques because a visual revolution, comparable to the information processing revolution of the 70s, faces the graphic artist in the 80s.

Ettienne Delessert, a Swiss artist/illustrator, spoke about a train ride through the Alps in which he subconsciously gathered artistic inspiration

through impressions from the scenery, passers-by, and a book he read. Delessert's intuitive approach found its way into his private and commercial images, which varied from childishly playful to frighteningly surreal water colors and ink drawings.

In the keynote speech to the conference, John Dreyfuss, architecture critic for the *L.A. Times*, tried to establish the relationship between graphic art, fine art, and architecture. While graphic art serves to convey information aesthetically and fine art strives to lift the spirit, architecture attempts to do both. Dreyfuss applauded attempts by post-modern architects to break with tradition, but he regarded most of their works as unsuccessful experiments which sacrificed practicality for newness.

Bruce Burdick, an industrial designer and planner, echoed Dreyfuss's call for innovation. He described the current situation in the design world as a "tumultuous calm." Using a yin/yang schema, Burdick diagrammed his dialectical thesis that design can only move forward by combining the lessons of history with the courage to risk failure. That design stands in a state of tumultuous calm is obviated by the diversity of presentations at the conference. No simple solutions emerged—or were accepted—to relieve this dilemma, other than the appeal to risk failure.

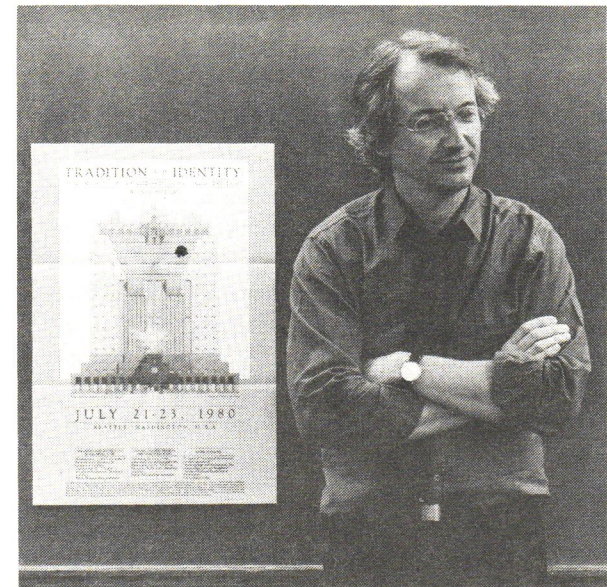
For designers, architects, or artists concerned with entering new territory, the Stanford University Conference on Design offered little solace. Like John Kenneth Galbraith's "no-business business meeting," no business was accomplished, but all departed with the cheerful conviction that there had been an exchange of ideas, an almost ironclad justification. If the conference achieved nothing more, it offered practitioners of these distantly linked professions the opportunity to pause and ask, in a paraphrase of *Phaedrus*, "Where do we come from and where are we going?"

## Tradition and Identity:

Towards an Anthropological Architecture  
A Three Day Symposium on Architecture

Victor Gardaya

"Tradition and Identity: Towards an Anthropological Architecture" was the title given to a symposium in Seattle on July 21st through 23rd. Sponsored by the Pacific Northwest Festival in the Forest Association—an organization working to establish a cultural complex on the order of Washington D.C.'s Wolf Trap—the conference drew together a glittering host of architects, sociologists, anthropologists, and cultural historians. To complete the roster and to give it a well-rounded humanist cast, a philosopher and a poet were also invited.



Michael Graves in Seattle.

Victor Gardaya

Although some participants traveled from as far away as Venice and Barcelona, most came from the United States and Canada. Consequently, the papers delivered and the responses they elicited were decidedly North American in perception and reference. The symposium itself, which was the first in a projected series of annual Humanities events, was divided into two days of closed working sessions, two resplendent evening lectures by such architect-superstars as Arthur Erickson and Michael Graves, and one final morning session devoted to a reiteration and elucidation of the entire event.

The panel, which assembled at architecture professor Anthony Vidler's invitation, consisted of: George Baird, architect and co-author of *Meaning in Architecture*, University of Toronto; Lance Brown,

architect, City University of New York; Roger Conover, poet, literary critic, and architectural editor for the M.I.T. Press; Galen Cranz, sociologist, University of California at Berkeley; Victoria de Grazia, historian and author of *Culture of Consent*, Rutgers; Xavier Rubert de Ventor, philosopher and author of *Heresies in Modern Art*, University of Barcelona; Arthur Erickson, architect; Kenneth Frampton, architect, and author of *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, Columbia; Hildred Geertz, anthropologist and author of *Socialization*, Princeton; Don Genasci, architect, Princeton; Michael Graves, architect, Princeton; Lars Lerup, architect, University of California at Berkeley; Mary McLeod, architectural historian, Columbia; George Ranalli, architect, Yale; Amos Rapoport, architect/anthropologist and author of *House, Form and Culture*, University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee; Georges Teyssot, architect and editor for *L'Architecture D'Aujourd'hui*, University of Venice; and Alan Trachtenberg, professor of American Studies and English, and author of *Brooklyn Bridge: Fact and Symbol*, Yale.

All of the discussions took place in closed session because this event was regarded as a real working conference. However, when the symposium went public at the Erickson lecture, at the Graves lecture, and at the final summary session, Seattle demonstrated its intense preoccupation with the subject of architecture. Erickson's lecture on Monday evening had to be relocated to a hall three times the size of the original, and still people were turned away. The same situation prevailed at the Graves lecture on Tuesday night. In each case, the houses were filled with artists and architects who came to listen to two men, who between themselves epitomize the complexities and contradictions in modern architecture. Each, in essence, summarized their life's work, and each implicitly occupied a position in direct conflict with the other. Erickson, the darling of the establishment, is the living embodiment of the old Academy; whereas Graves, the darling of the youngest generation, the Princeton theoretician, is the defender of the new Academy's faith. Erickson and Graves gave lectures that individually did little more than champion their separate styles (Erickson synthesizes Japanese and Persian influences, whereas Graves celebrates Egyptian form and color), but which in tandem offered an overview of the vast chasms within architecture today. The problematic rift between them exists in spite of the fact that the fundamental motivation of a liberal society is mutually shared, almost ecumenical.

This ecumenism was evident on Wednesday morning during the final session, when Vidler and Frampton each graded the symposium based on the degree of synthesis each privately had hoped for and what synthesis actually had been achieved. Vidler was in a conciliatory mood. By means of a slide presentation and text, he attempted to show architecture's slow-moving pace through the last two hundred years. Progress in architecture being relative, Vidler implied that a great deal of groundbreaking had occurred in these three days. Frampton, on the other hand, worried as he had consistently throughout the conference about Hannah Arendt's warning of the 'privitization' of the modern world. Where is the public realm today and parenthetically, what is architecture's role? Paraphrasing Clement Greenberg, Frampton suggested that if contemporary society continued to deprive artists and architects of any tasks that they could take seriously, they would remain in the safe confines of their ivory towers: Art for art's sake mirrored by an architecture for architecture's sake. This was only another way of saying what philosopher de Ventos earlier had said concerning the paradoxical avant garde of this century: first they advocated the future, then they advocated the present, and now they champion the past.

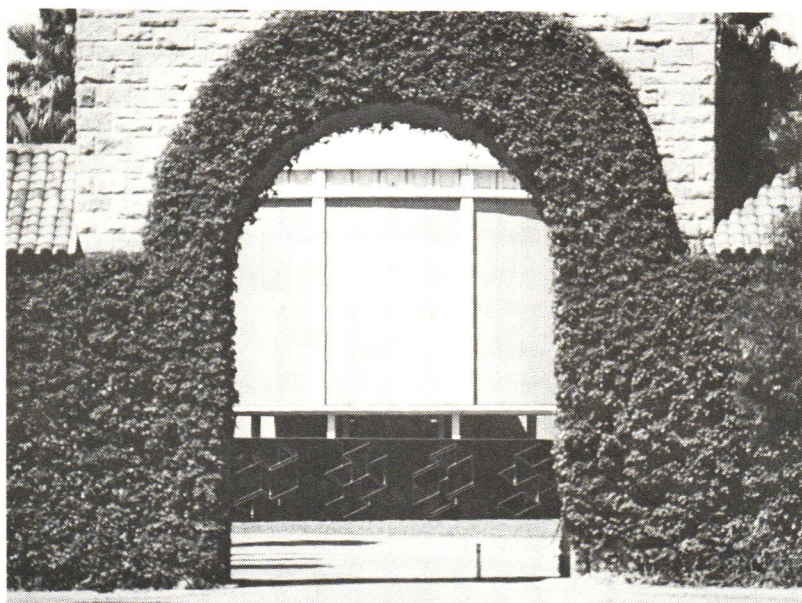
Towards an Anthropological Architecture" simultaneously succeeded and failed on several levels. As a bit of intellectual hoop-la which hopefully would rebound to its host, Seattle's credit the diligent pursuit of knowledge, it worked simply because it happened. As a bit of theater, for the sake of masses who hunger for bread and circuses on such a rarefied level as this symposium and on a subject so powerfully diverting as architecture, it worked because exposure to the larger world's concerns always diminishes our own so comfortably. As an introduction to the abrasive and challenging conflict of ideas which is characteristic of contemporary architecture, it succeeded tolerably well

Continued on page 47



# Homage to the Mall

*Interaction at an Unfamiliar Intersection*



Viewed from the center of campus, the Wall seems to extend indefinitely.

## A R T

Designed long before his death in 1976, Josef Albers's Stanford Wall was dedicated on August 1st of this year, marking both the culmination of the distinguished artist's brilliant career and the beginning of a new era in the arts and humanities at Stanford. At a time when distinctions between drawn, built, and spoken architecture have become blurred, the significance of a work that is at once drawing, sculpture, and architecture extends far beyond this campus. Not only does the Wall enhance its surroundings with the astounding elegance of its presence, it reinterprets many of Albers's early teachings on visual perceptions and reopens fundamental questions concerning the relationships between art and architecture.

Fifty-four feet long, nine feet high, and one foot thick, the Wall is a prime example of environmental art. It is the largest project of Albers's career in terms of physical size; it is also the largest commitment to any act of creative art at Stanford, or perhaps at any university.

Born in Bottrop, Germany in 1888, Albers was both a student and a teacher at the Bauhaus before emigrating to the U.S. in 1933. He taught first at Black Mountain College and then at Yale, retiring from teaching in 1960. Primarily a painter and printmaker, Albers is best known for his writings on color and, in particular, for his book, *Despite Straight Lines*. He became a sculptor in 1950 at the suggestion of Walter Gropius.

Although Albers never visited the Stanford campus, he was inspired by the absence of any public collection of his art on the West Coast to present the University with the Wall's design as a gift. He rejected a private collector's offer to have it built at his residence, preferring instead to site it at the University. There it would play a larger role in the education of visual perception, along with the modest but fast-growing Stanford collection of other well-known artists of Albers's time, among them Henry Moore, Alexander Calder, and Arnaldo Pomodoro.

In 1976, the present site in Lomita Mall, located between the Old Quadrangle (the ingenious Spanish-Romanesque complex designed by the firms of Frederick Law Olmsted and Henry Hobson Richardson at the turn of the century) and the 1950s-Modern edifice affectionately referred to as the "Physics Tank" (designed by the late Gardner Dailey), was approved by all committees and by the Physics Department. But the official approval of the site and the go-ahead for construction was finally granted by an administration conditioned by years of campus controversy over the project after the artist's death.

The ensuing search for a willing and suitable contractor, followed by the laborious process of material selection and hand fabrication, taxed the patience of all who shared concern for the project.

The pivotal role in the acquisition and realization of the project was played by Stanford Professor Albert Elsen, a preeminent expert on Rodin and a champion of modern art, who persuaded private donors to supplement the original gift of construction funds from the Albers Foundation and who tirelessly worked to keep the project alive and moving during the decade-long effort to complete the Wall. Of the process, Elsen writes: "Albers's exacting standards, reflected in the nature and specifications of the

design, were unforgiving of imprecise workmanship and sorely tested the state of the building arts in California."

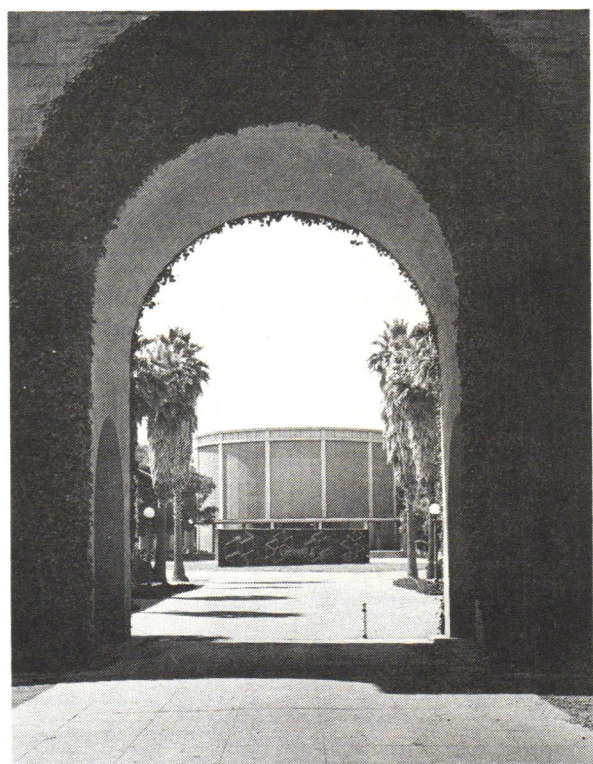
The most dramatic approach to the Stanford Wall is from the exact center of the campus at Memorial Court in the late morning sun. Standing on the circle in the pavement that marks the crossing of the main axis extending from Palm Drive to Memorial Church and the lateral axis connecting the old Main Library and the Physics Tank, we see the four constellations floating in a black band that appears as a continuous strip. The ends of the Wall are obscured by the west arch, and the band seems to be flattened against the Physics Tank. The siting scheme for the Wall calls for a row of holly oak trees to be planted across the entrance to the Tank, to provide a visual buffer, to the benefit of both, between these two geometric elements. Funding and permission from the Physics Department are the only impediments to executing this part of the plan.

From this aspect, the diagonal orientation of the Wall is virtually imperceptible; it is now a proper receiver of the lateral axis in the best Haussmanic tradition. As we move down the axis toward the Wall, its dimensions are immediately revealed and it becomes a magnetic object. Passing through the arch we are aware that something is askew, the horizontals do not align (the holly oak trees will delay this effect); and it is not until we move into the palm-lined forecourt that the true orientation of the Wall is finally apparent. At this point, the formality of the Old Quad gives way to the random order of Lomita Mall where the Wall's chameleonic qualities easily adapt it to the irregularities of the space it now inhabits.

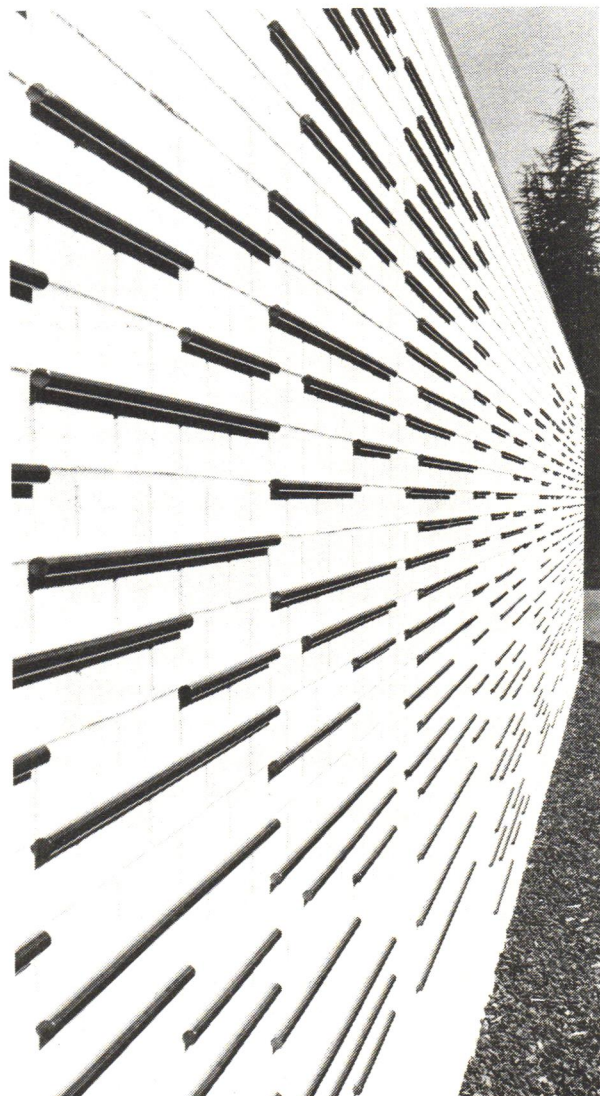
At close range, the constellations engage the imagination with ephemeral forms, drawn in satin-grained stainless steel, that turn inside out, dematerializing and returning with increasing rapidity until our perceptual resources are exhausted. Albers had this to say about these four figures: "they are equidistant, of equal height and width. . . share common contours and precisely repeated inner subdivisions." In *Despite Straight Lines*, Francois Bucher, who worked closely with Albers, wrote that these Constellations demonstrated his views "on the stages of life":

"The first of the front constellations intones the complexities of ownership and closed interpersonal relations. The second tectonic shapes are opening and outward bound, while still firmly anchored within each other. The third design evolves into a dynamic fluidity of contradictory directions. The fourth construction floats with liberated ease; it is spiritual, nonpossessive, and as Albers said 'owns but does not behave as if it did.' It completes the orderly progression into a stable 'fluidum.'"

As we stand to the northeast under the trees of the mall, the highly polished African black granite surface reflects a view back down the lateral axis toward the Library framed by the Old Quad buildings. (The Wall is most reflective after the sun has crossed over to the brick side.) By switching focal length we can superimpose the constellations on this campus view. As we move around to the right, the Wall seems to disappear, reduced to a narrow stainless steel band no larger than a lamp-post with an unusual shadow. The view of the Old Quad buildings is now virtually uninterrupted, but,

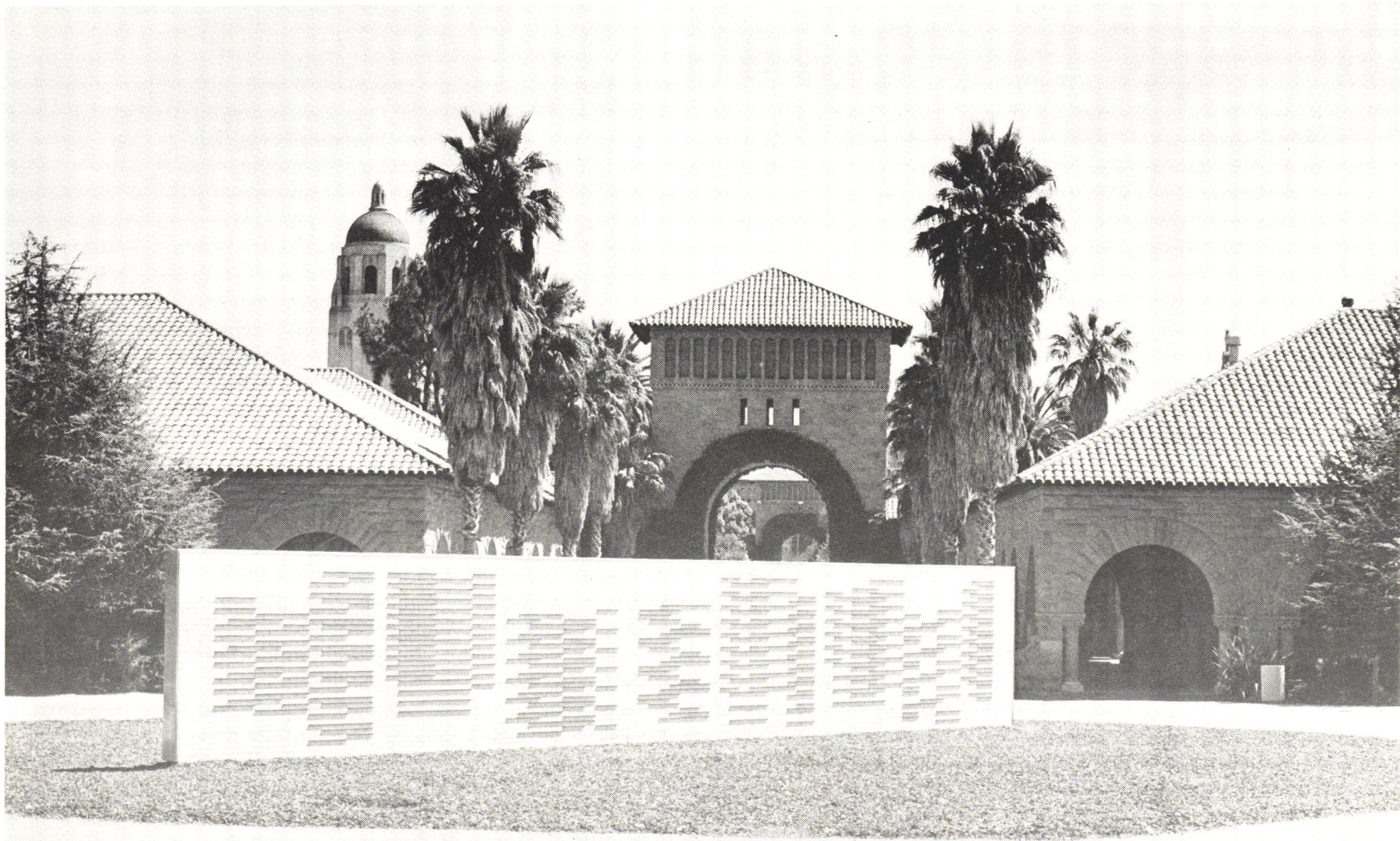


An artistic billboard to contain a meandering space.

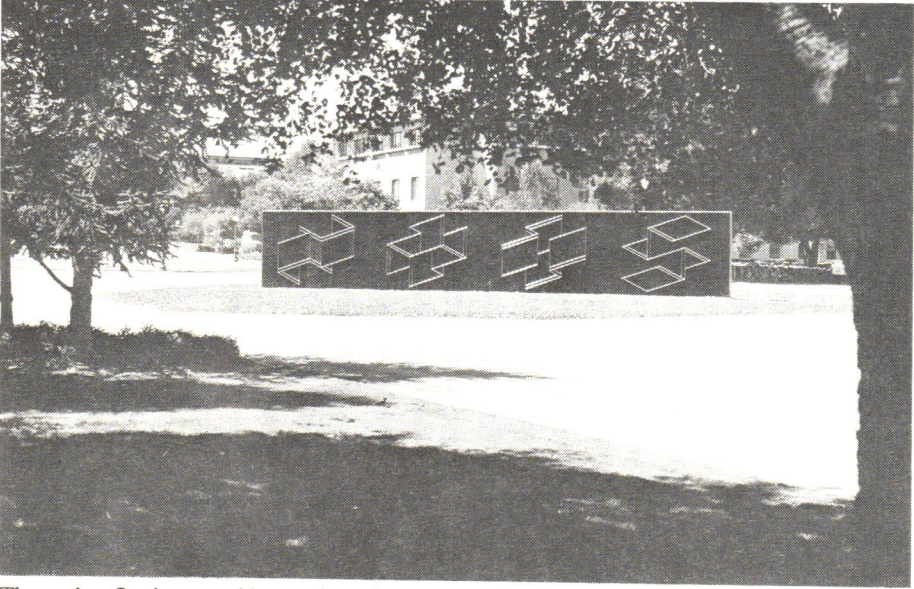


The cryptic messages diffuse into a meteorite shower.

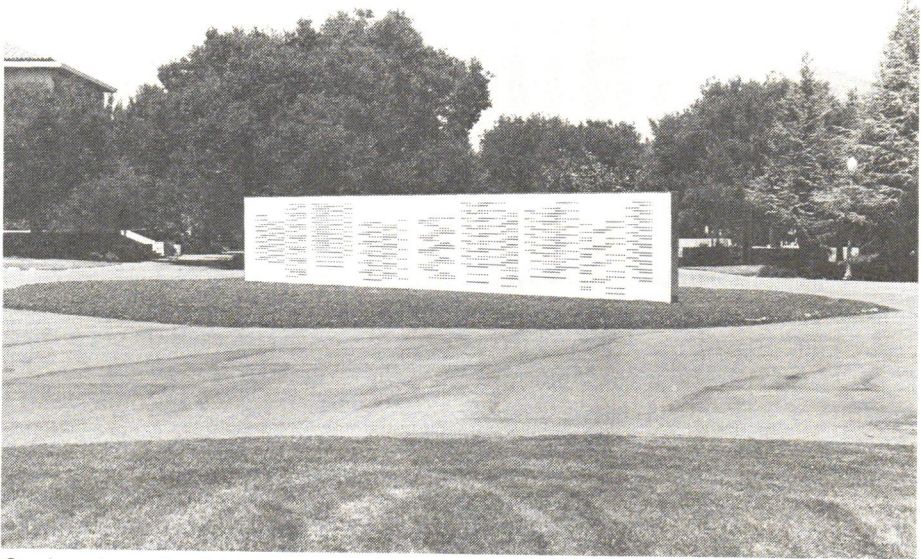




Looking down the cross axis toward the Library, for maximum contrasts.



The sun's reflections provide an animated response as one moves around the Wall.



On closer inspection, it becomes an exquisite object in need of a backdrop of trees.

from a position directly in front of the Physics Tank, we experience the maximum contrast between old and new: crisp metallic lines, gleaming black-on-white, against the rough-hewn sandstone and terra cotta roofs of the background buildings lushly accented with foliage. Here is pure artistic form juxtaposed against functional reality — a timeless message superimposed on the parochial California-picturesque.

The computerlike heiroglyphics begin their dance sequence as the afternoon sun travels westward, with the black-chrome rods casting ever-shortening shadows on the white Arkansas brick surface. As we walk around to the south, the sun's reflection follows us in a vertical line of dazzling highlights. In a close-up view from the end of the Wall, looking nearly parallel to the brick surface, the rods take on the effect of a meteorite shower in a space voyage.

The brick side of the Wall has its early origins in Albers's Bauhaus "thermometer" designs on glass. Describing the "back" of the Wall with its reversal of light and shadow, Albers wrote: "...there appears here a continuous up and down of architectural masses consisting of dark horizontals. These being the joints in a white brick wall, they measure either two or three lengths of a brick and produce a continuous change in weight and firmness in an endless rhythm."

From the southwest uphill approach, the Wall nicely plugs a spatial leak as Lomita Mall is diffused under the canopy of oak trees to the north; it becomes a focal object that stops and contains the

space, engaging in a dialogue with the Earth Sciences Building at the opposite end, a pretentious glass and concrete temple designed by the Palo Alto firm of Spencer, Lee, and Bussey in 1969. (The Wall wins the debate hands down.)

In the idyllic environment of this suburban campus, one is gently lulled by the figurative humaneness of the older buildings, by the dignity and charm of the landscape, and by a climate that is disarmingly agreeable. All the hard edges reside behind closed doors, locked securely in the working brain of the university, packaged in the abstract theories of science and the calculations of politics and finance. The Wall upsets this tidy paradox, jarring one of the venerable places on the campus that may well have received another lovely fountain or perhaps a focal specimen tree. Like a monumental high-tech signboard bearing inscrutable ciphers of a cosmic order, transliterated magically by the Force from another galaxy, the Wall shocks the unsuspecting viewer with an overwhelming realization that something here actually demands to be understood, pressing against the senses, insisting, relentlessly confronting until the interaction begins.

In the words of Professor Elsen, "Albers saw his work as contributing to the esthetic education and visual enjoyment of students and faculty he would never know. The Wall is his affirmation that art and science are not enemies, but complementary faculties, both requiring daring with discipline."<sup>2</sup> In its daring move to bring this work to the campus, Stanford has not only entered the highest echelon of public art patronage but it has embarked upon new

courses in the creative management of its own physical resources and in expanding its emphases toward truly universal education. For Elsen, "The Wall is an exclamation of the place of esthetic value in a world of material fact." For Stanford, under the leadership of its new president, Donald Kennedy, the dedication of the Wall as his first official act appropriately articulated the beginning of an administration that avows its intent to strengthen the humanities, ending a decade of virtual neglect in favor of the hard professions. For architecture the Wall sends yet another message: At a time when the Modern Movement has attained archival immortality among other stylistic orders in the body of architectural history, we may look at this work not as an architectural statement in the polemics of formalism or as a philosophical comment, but as an eloquent lesson in universal realities of spatial dynamics and principles of optics, light, and visual perception. As testimony to the transcendence of truth, Josef Albers's Stanford Wall is a new resource for those who never tire of discovery. ●

—Robert Mittelstadt

*Robert Mittelstadt is a practicing architect in San Francisco. He was director of the Stanford Program in Architecture from 1973 to 1977, becoming associated with the Wall while he was chairman of the faculty Committee on Outdoor Art. In 1976 he was appointed project architect, responsible for site design and construction supervision, taking over from Los Angeles architect Craig Ellwood.*

<sup>1</sup>Campus Report, August 6, 1980 (Stanford University News Service).  
<sup>2</sup>Albert Elsen, *Art News*, in press.



Little land remains available in metropolitan areas of American cities, and San Francisco and the Bay Area are no different from other urban areas in this respect. Except for large and speculative downtown developments, the urban turf is spaded only sporadically by young designers out to prove themselves. *Archetype* here publishes six "small spaces" in the San Francisco Bay Area. In each case, the designers worked with moderate to severe budgetary constraints (limits ranging from \$40 to \$100 per square foot), but in compensation, they offer rich spatial modulations.

Each of these interiors represents a different approach to the problem of aesthetic retrofit. From soft High Tech to Neo-rational fabrications, these born-again small spaces transcend their old incarnations. A newfound Post-Modern expressionism can now be discerned behind the fleeting fog of a San Francisco summer, perhaps more accessible than its modernist predecessor. Although the semi-ornamental treatment of spaces and surfaces accounts for a renaissance of interest in architecture, adolescence alone excuses the new post-modernist style. So far, it is defined only by its inclusions, and we can only hope that it will come of age with something other than flimsy historicist imitations.

Interiors (illusionistically buttressed by gypboard and mouldings rather than structural elements) convey the changing mood of popular appreciations of architectural space, but they also often represent the first steps in the careers of young architects practicing in a highly competitive field. Working small both in scale and budget, the designers obviously lavish more attention on these projects than is typically possible with large commissions or even single family houses. In most cases, the relationship between client and designer is also closer, and this demands additional skills of the designer to produce a product pleasing to all.

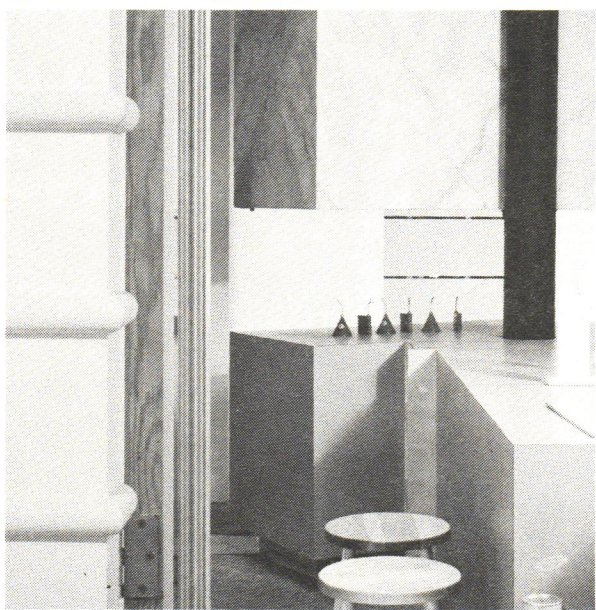
Each of these designers can be identified and understood by his/her own definition of what a post-modern era implies. Their work marks a definitive break from the woodsy, cutesy, hands-on aesthetic so long associated with this region.

—Mark Mack, with photographs by Henry Bowles

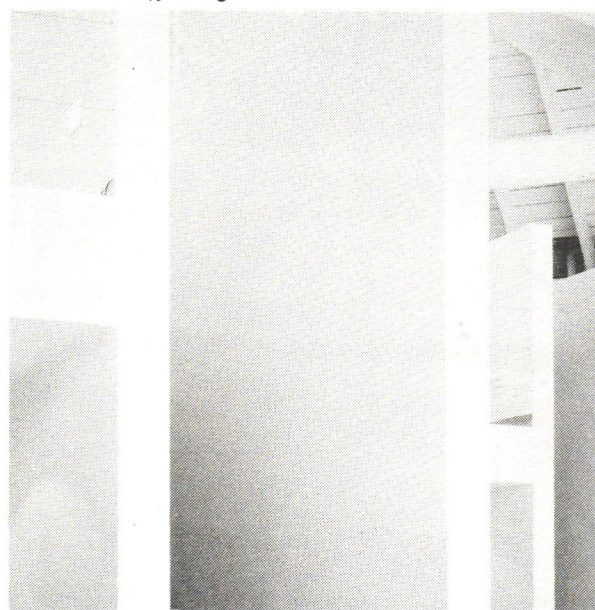
# SMALL SPACES

*Urban and Suburban Refinements*

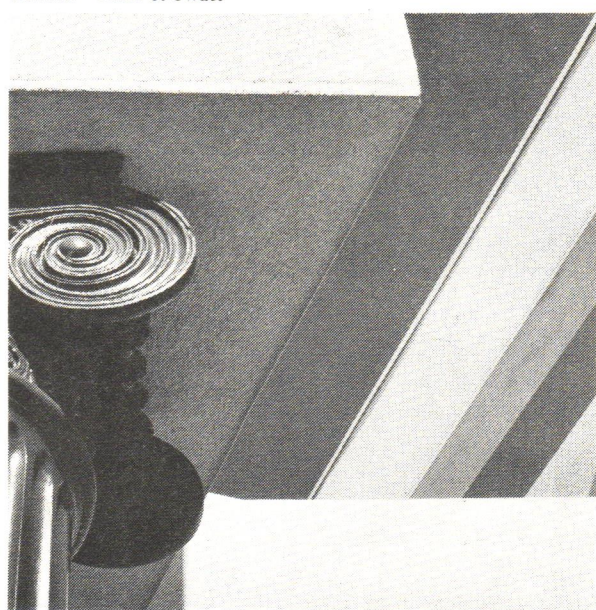
ARCH Store – Coliver/Friedlander



Studios – Stout/Jennings



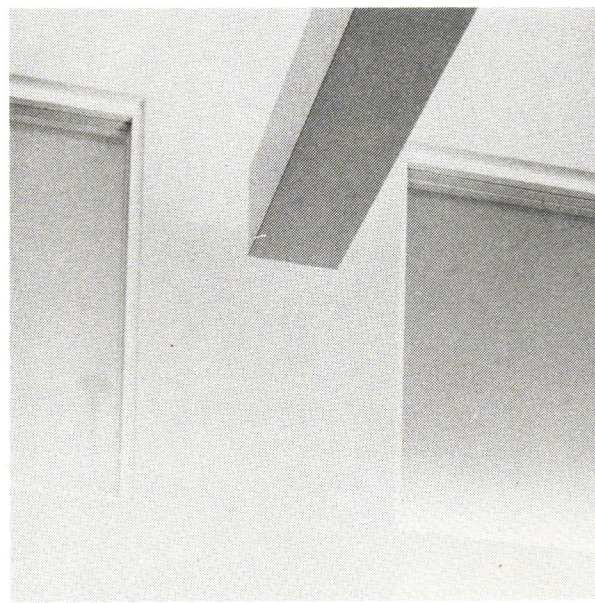
Offices – Stein & Swatt



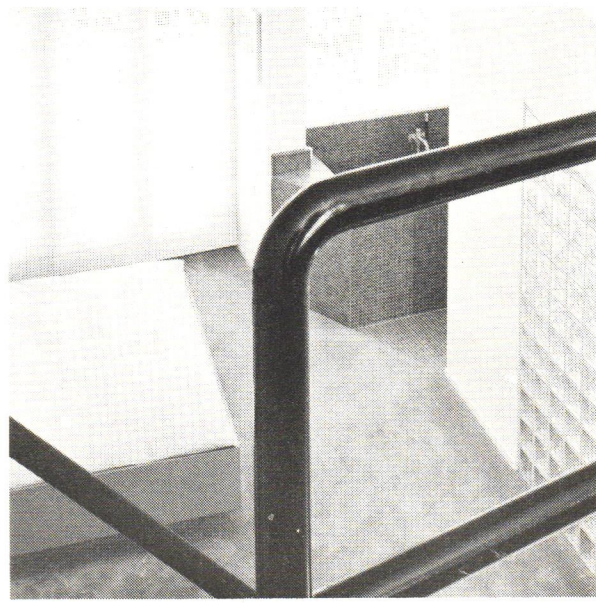
Delicatessen – Levy



Law Offices – Fisher



Residence – Fisher





*Location of Project:* ARCH Store, Osgood Place, San Francisco

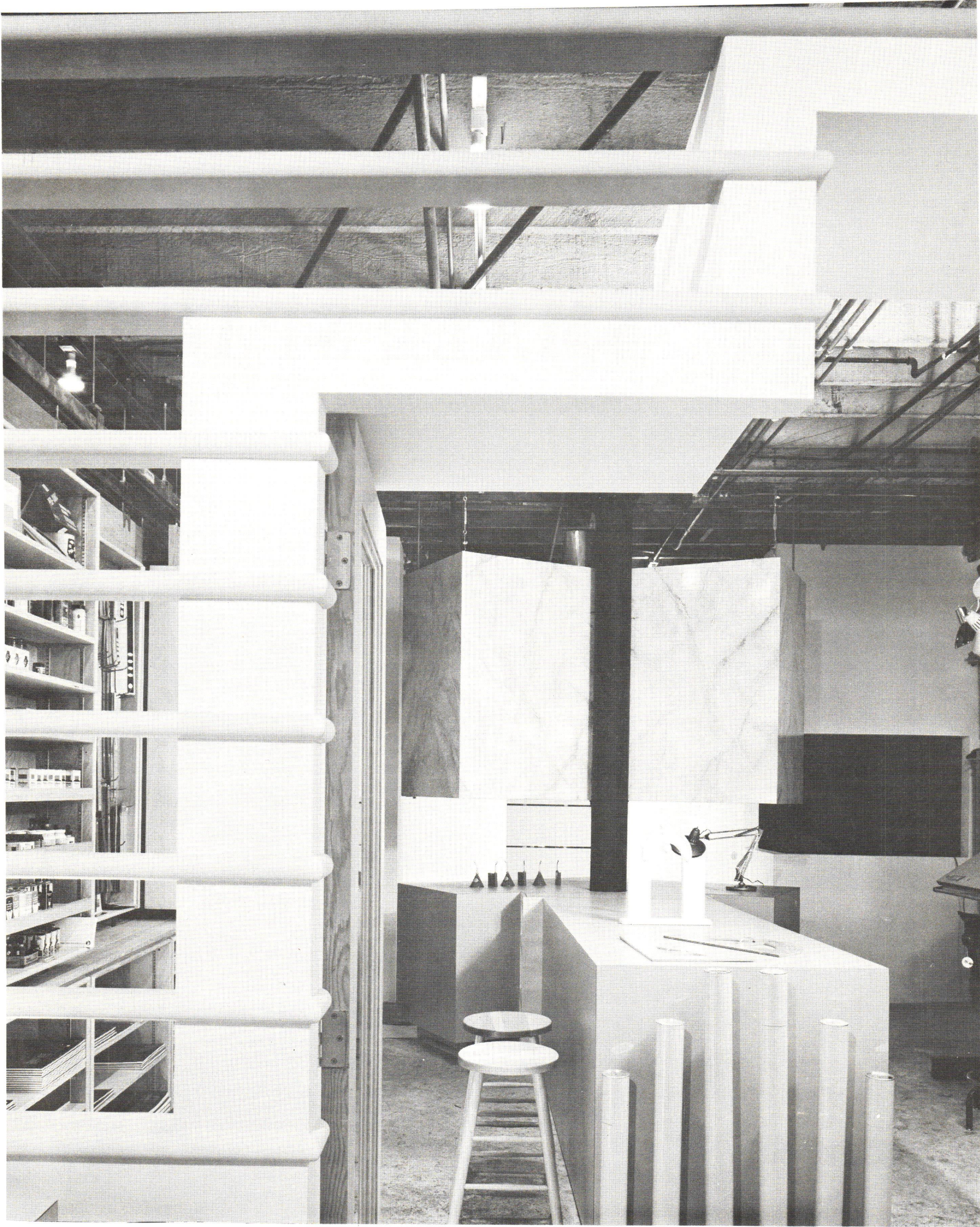
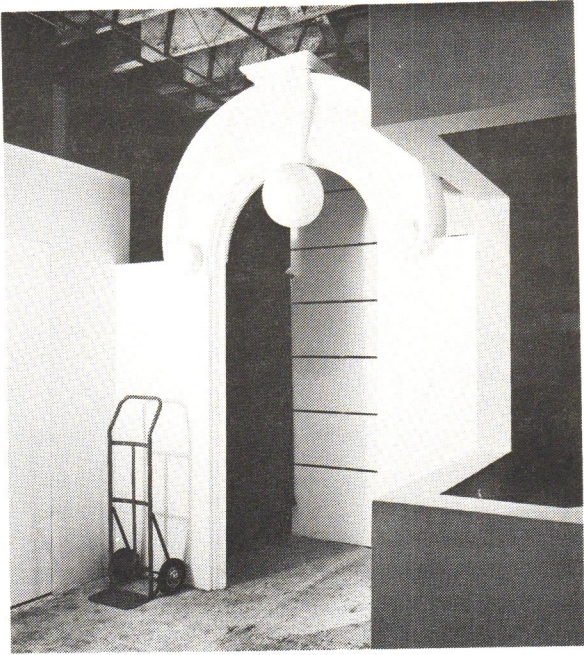
*Architect:* Susie Coliver and Daniel Friedlander

*Description of Project:* A store that sells architectural drafting and graphic supplies.

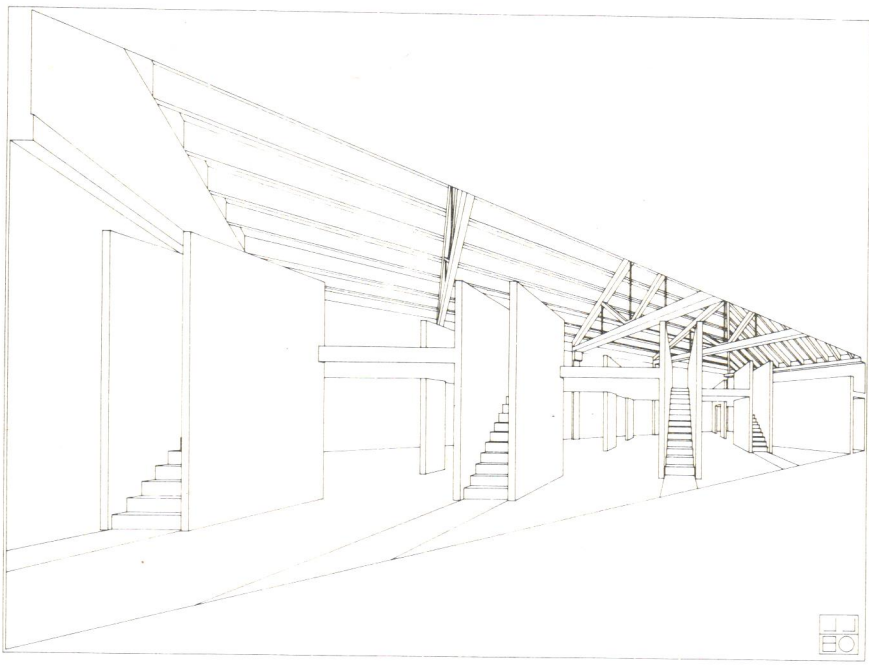
*Design Ideas and Concepts:* To playfully make the best possible use of a small basement space. The designers felt that a store designed to serve a wholly architectural clientele should display the everyday tools of the trade in a manner befitting the end result to which each would be put.

*Major Materials:* Birch ply, particle board, plastic lam, marble and paint.

*Additional Comments:* The designers used materials like double layers of sliding shelves to conserve space. An arched partition is also a series of shelves for displaying goods.







*Location of Project:* Studio on McCaupin

*Architect:* Bill Stout and Jim Jennings

*Description of Project:* Renovation of old warehouses into offices for graphic designers.

*Design Ideas and Concepts:* There are four identical stairways leading to a mezzanine which "floats" within the space of the building. This design is inspired by the grid plan of the area of the city in which the building is located. The grid plan is reflected in the repetition of the stairs.

*Major Materials:* Concrete slab, wood frame and gyp board.

*Additional Comments:* A stream which once ran under the building also influenced the placement of the stairs. The stairs are oriented towards the light from the metal sash windows which are on the side of the building.





*Location of Project:* Office on College Avenue, Berkeley

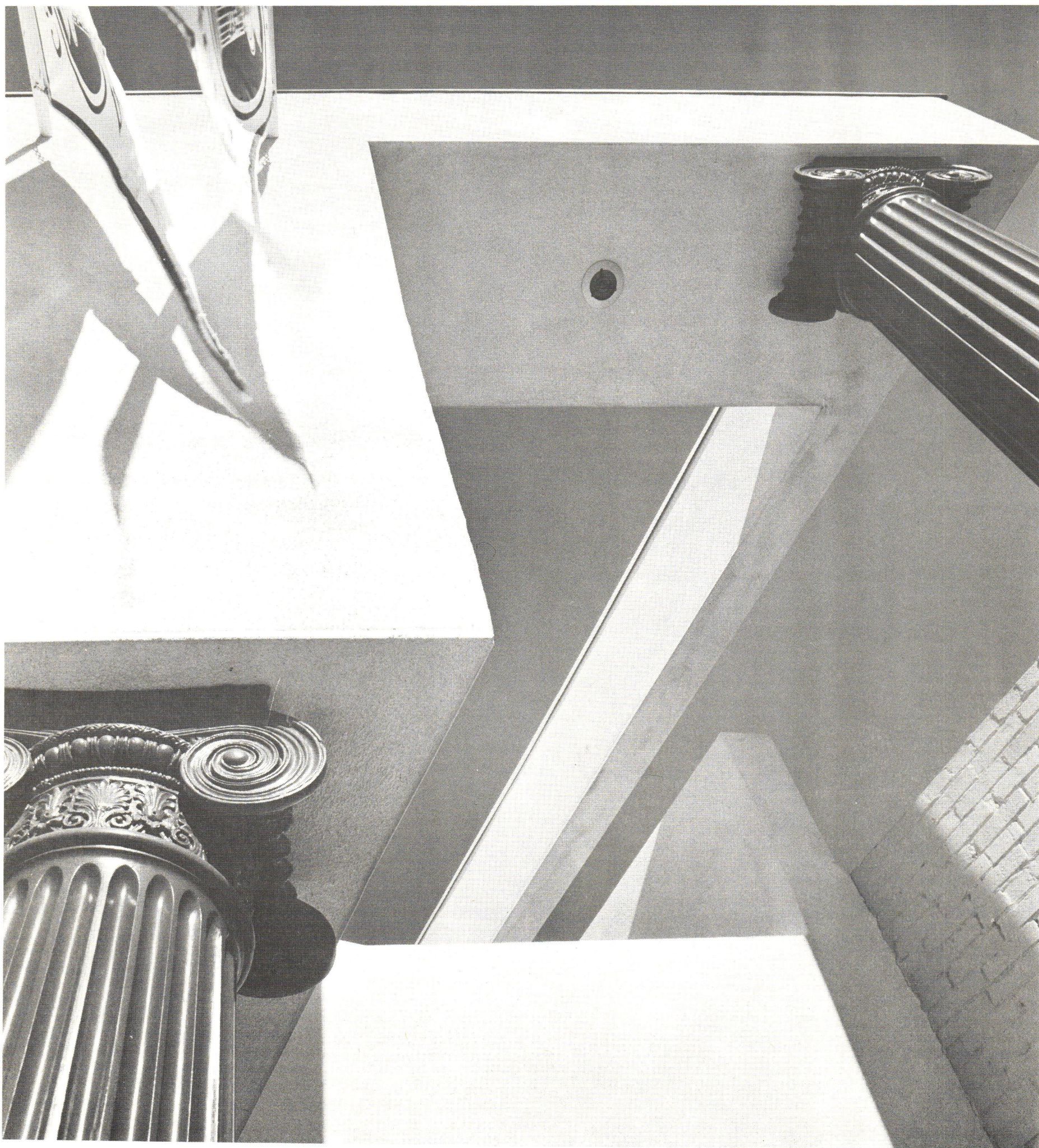
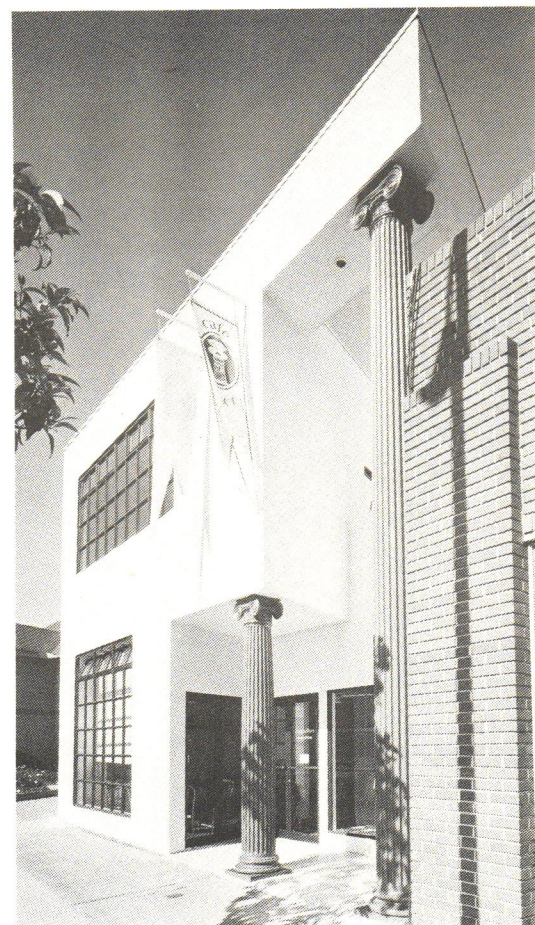
*Architect:* Bernie Stein and Bob Swatt

*Description of Project:* A building which was formerly a one-story bar is converted into a commercial edifice with architectural offices upstairs and a cafe/bakery downstairs. A second floor was added and the entire building renovated.

*Design Ideas and Concepts:* Contrast between pure Schindleresque form and decorative ionic columns. The contrast is used to enhance the perception of the two opposites.

*Major Materials:* Exterior: White sand float finished stucco. Windows and doors: Bronz anodized aluminum. Columns: Fabricated wood and resin. Interior: Gyp Board.

*Additional Comments:* The building was originally designed without the columns but the architects felt it appeared too formal for the neighborhood. The columns were added for a whimsical effect.







*Location of Project:* American Deli, Clement Street

*Architect:* Toby Levy

*Description of Project:* To relocate a neighborhood delicatessen into a space once occupied by a 1930s beauty parlor.

*Design Ideas and Concepts:* Levy wanted to create a modern version of a classical, Roman, light-filled cafe on two orders: one) to create light and, two) to give the space scale. Both work to lend a unified rhythm to the space.

*Major Materials:* Grip board and wood light boxes.

*Additional Comments:* Levy's original scheme was to use a multitude of pastel colors. The deli-owners were opposed to this idea, forcing the architect to forfeit one element of light.





*Location of Project:* Law Offices, Berkeley

*Architect:* Marie Fisher

*Description of Project:* Renovation of a 2800 foot space in an old YWCA for two separate law firms which share a law library, bathroom, kitchen, and rental space.

*Design Ideas and Concepts:* To facilitate three separate offices with separate receptionists and waiting areas. It was necessary to make each space immediately readable to whomever walked in the door. The use of ambient light and clerestones achieve more pleasant, less "office-y," lit spaces.

*Major Materials:* Sheetrock, paint, plastic, laminated desks, tables, rubber tile and carpet.

*Additional Comments:* Although it is not noticeable in the photographs, the color scheme is significant in this job. The cosmetic counter color choices are used to contrast with the more ponderous demeanor of a criminal law office.







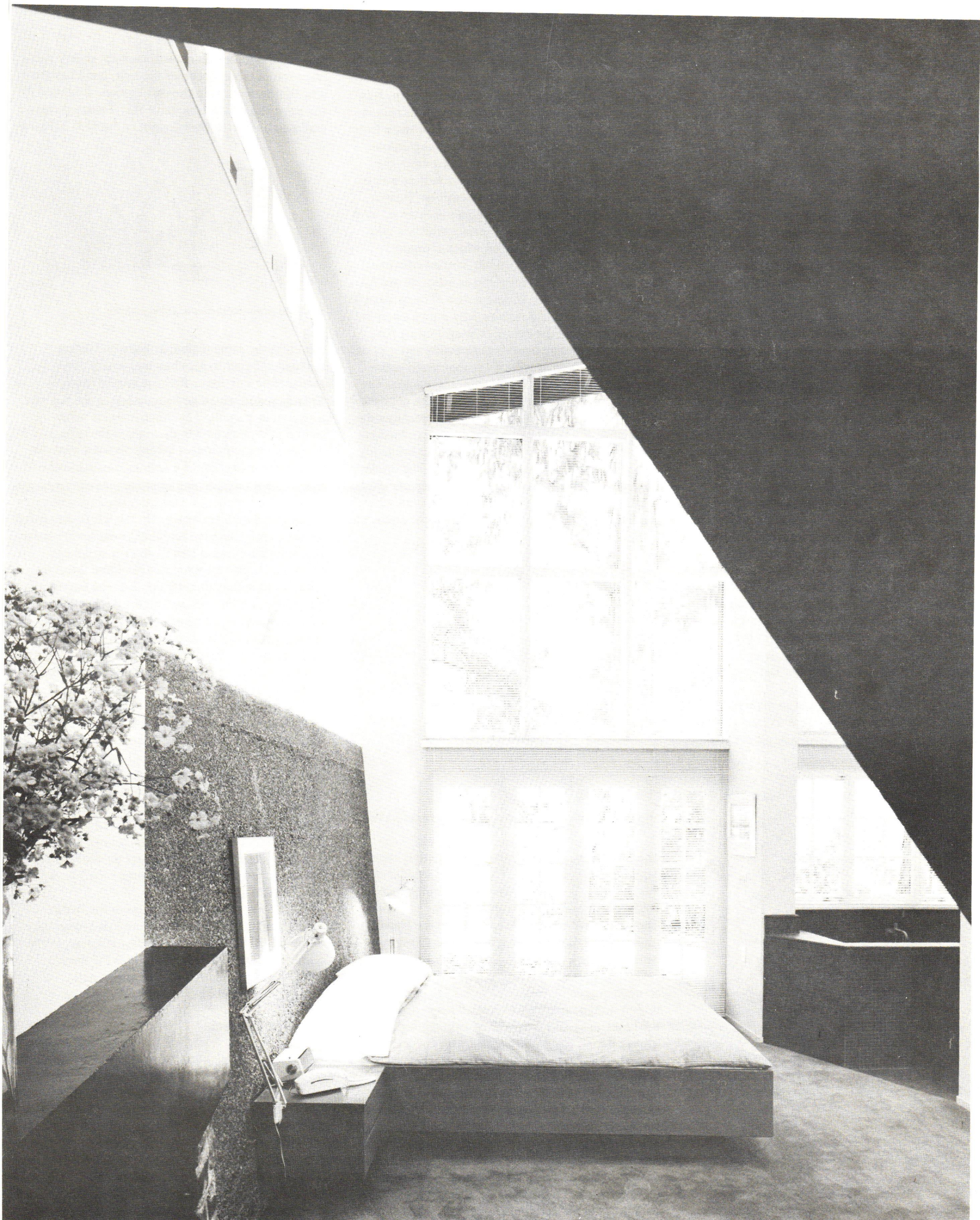
*Location of Project:* 1907 Queens Road, Berkeley

*Architect:* Marie Fisher

*Description of Project:* To create a residential renovation with a bedroom, bath, loft and work space in sprawling, redwood house.

*Design Ideas and Concepts:* To make a “refuge” for parents with a growing family by taking advantage of the two-story open space to create a cool opposition to the woody fabric of the rest of the house.

*Major Materials:* Sheetrock, paint, glass blocks, ceramic tile, CORIAN, mirror and carpet.





# Schinkel Residence

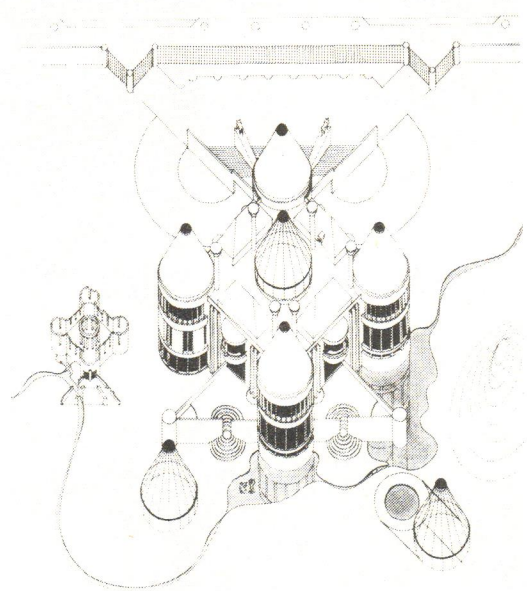
A literary submission to the Japan Architect Competition of 1979

Though different in appearance, both projects on these pages share much in common.

First, both were submitted to recent international competitions and both were rejected.

Second, both stress the important quality of the architect as writer, something overlooked by most editorialized and abbreviated architectural reporting.

The recent trend of architecture towards a more drawing oriented direction prompts us to offer an alternative: the intimate obsessions of some architects, i.e. architectural story telling.



Axonometric view of the Schinkel residence from the south

## P R O J E C T S

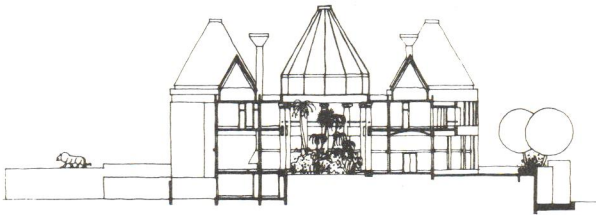
The diaries of Thiago Grosso have just been sold at Sotheby's. These extraordinary documents cast a new light on the relationship between Thiago Grosso, and his great teacher and friend Schinkel, for they reveal that Thiago's immense creativity not only influenced and disturbed Schinkel, but finally led him to stop designing. Evidently it was Thiago who initiated their well-documented tour of France, Spain and Italy. And it was Thiago who insisted that Schinkel visit the architectural fantasies of the Loire Valley. Thiago, having been brought up at Chambord and Blois (as the only son of the papal representative to that area), was intimately familiar with what they would find there. And the chateaux with their strange mixture of gothic and renaissance architecture were to have an extraordinary effect on both of these men, for it was this visit's impact that changed the course of their careers.

On their return to Berlin, Schinkel bought a plot in the recently demarcated suburbs to the west of Berlin on the edge of the Grunewald district with a view to the south onto the river Havel. Schinkel then asked Thiago to design his house. This Thiago did in a matter of days and Schinkel, enthusiastic about the design, immediately began construction. Because of the many political convulsions of the epoch the house took seven years to complete. This delay permitted the architects to develop and refine many ideas, and to incorporate the scientific discoveries of those times into the design. Schinkel often sent Thiago on buying expeditions to Italy, to recently liberated Greece, to the Middle East and to Egypt. The spoils of these artistic raids resulted in the famous and unique collection of sculpture, painting, artifacts and furniture today in the Schinkel museum, which were lovingly and painstakingly re-assembled after the last war by Mathilda Ungers.

Thiago's idea for the house was an inversion of Palladio's Villa Rotunda plan set at 45° and curiously bastioned at each extremity, reminiscent of Chambord.

The house itself is rigorously related to the diagonals of the square site. To the west of the house and transfixing by the cross axis is a walled garden. It is a ruined fortification with a circular temple ruin in the centre: a folly. The outer walls are of stone from an old Bavarian building bought for this purpose. The ruins of the circular temple derive from the central core of the Temple of Venus at Pratulota in Corsica, which was brought to Berlin by Thiago. This most ancient part of the house is entered from the south through a ramped terrace which is split on its west side by the stream which meanders through the site. The steep hill, rising seven meters, lies to the east of the house and sufficiently southward to catch the late afternoon sun. The orchard is split into two and laid out formally in two sweeping curves bordering the drives. The swimming bath (just a small plunge pool) is both inside and outside. It can be enclosed at will by the motorized glass-house which Schinkel designed in his old age. The water is heated during the winter. On the opposite side of the swimming pool, and complementing the symmetry, is a hothouse for the strange collection of plants which Mrs. Schinkel loved and brilliantly displayed in the central winter garden. The diaries describe the changing of the existing streams' course to run through three pools adjoining the house, with the folly to cast reflections and display the swans of

delightful double volume with a metal gallery and a huge round table, occupies the right hand bastion. The dining room is in the east bastion. It housed the exquisite expandable table that Thiago designed and which Albert Speer bought at the 1937 Schinkel



Section through the main axis of the residence.

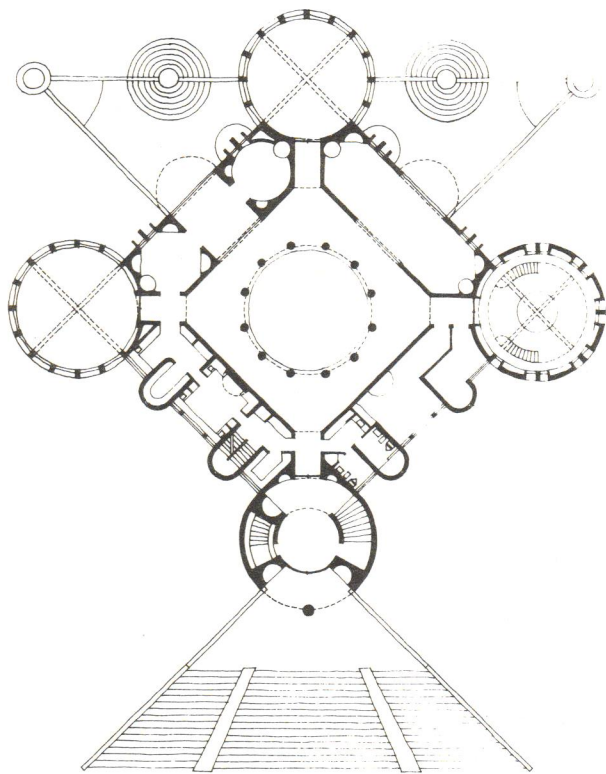
sale. It is the same table that Herman Goring persuaded Speer to give him and which Speer managed to buy again after his release from Spandau, and which he bequeathed to the Schinkel museum in his will. The other two side wings open onto raised terraces. On the right is the gallery which once again houses Schinkel's somewhat disconcerting collection of paintings consisting of both magnificent trecento and quattrocento masterpieces, as well as a number of romantic paintings and many peasant and naive ex-votos. On the left is the central glazed porch, Barbara Schinkel's own sewing room, the beautiful "round room" and the delightful polygonal breakfast room with Chinese furniture. The round lounge directly opposite the entrance is a belvedere, and in good weather its large windows slide upwards to transform it into a sunny and breezy place, with a wonderful view of the Havel and the distant Hundekehlesse. From either raised terrace one descends onto the south lawn through Bramantesque stairs.

The bedroom floor consists of six bedroom suites of various sizes, all accessible from the upper galeria. The main suite, which has its bedroom over the lounge, now contains a replica of the central bed-house which was used for fire wood when the house was occupied by Russian troops at the end of the last war. Each of the three bastion bedrooms has a circular balcony with plant boxes. The ground floor houses the servants' apartments, service rooms, stores, change rooms and garages for four cars. The house is centrally heated but some rooms have fireplaces.

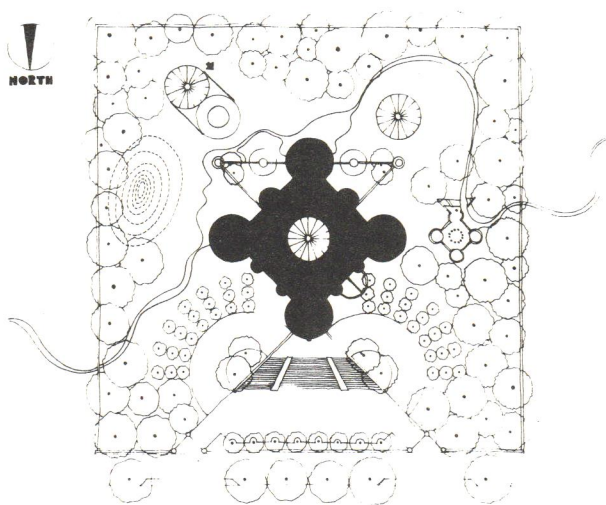
The house, which now belongs to the Berlin municipality, was recently restored. It houses the Schinkel collection, and is the headquarters of the Schinkel society. The restoration is the work of those distinguished English architects and Berlinophiles, Alison and Peter Smithson. ●

### Pancho Guedes

Pancho Guedes is a practicing architect who built innumerable structures in and around Mozambique. He now teaches at the University of Witwaterstrand in Johannesburg, South Africa.



Upper ground floor of the residence with central wintergarden.



Site plan with garden and walled garden. To the right, a ruin.

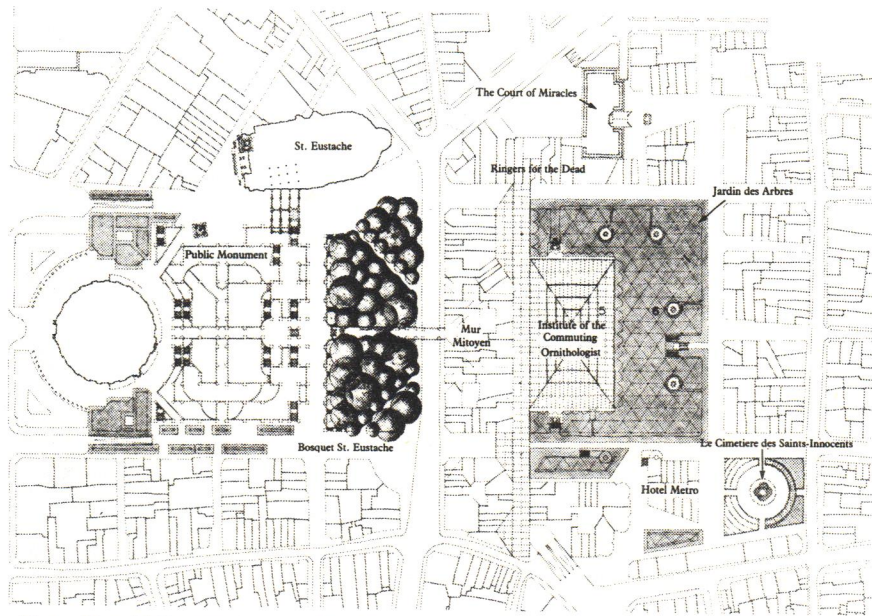
the Schinkels' youngest daughter, the well known soprano Karin Gregotti. The existing woodland area on the three inner boundaries is carefully maintained, with the exception of some of the trees in front of the lounge which impede the view to the Havel and the distant Hundekehlesse and are replaced by smaller trees.

One enters the house through a very broad flight of steps guarded by a pair of superb Egyptian middle-kingdom lions for which Thiago designed the bases. The entrance portico with fantastic cast bronze doors, leads into the hall with concealed curved stairs and a tall central conical shaft which Schinkel gilded to give the most exquisite blond light. From the entrance hall one passes into the "Galeria" with the central ionic and circular conservatory. It is on the two levels of "Galerias" that Schinkel's collection of antique and contemporary sculpture and his own stage sets are displayed. To the left of the entrance are the kitchen and other service rooms. To the right are the cloak rooms and Schinkel's private study. The library, which has a



# A wall behind which something is happening.

The competition of Paris’s Les Halles used as a cultural and literary investigation.



Map of Les Halles area in central Paris.

The market at Les Halles, ‘the stomach of Paris,’ had been retired—rusticated from the city. There was suddenly less of Paris and more of something less.

The initial redevelopment scheme offered the suburban promise of stimulation through simulation. The main station of a new Regional Express Network would deliver the suburbs to Les Halles. A subterranean shopping mall guaranteed the preclusion of anything but franchised consumerism. A 300-room, three star hotel would accommodate tour groups. Investment housing in the form of ‘luxury’ condominiums, a convention center, corporate offices, and parking would somehow fill the hole left by the disappearance of the market.

Only some of it was built: the station, the ‘Consumer Forum,’ and the Heating Ventilating and Air Conditioning plant (HVAC), which epitomized the programmatic and architectural folly of the scheme. Disguised as ‘a building in the vernacular,’ with quarry stone facade and zinc mansard roof, it was nevertheless a 75 foot high wall behind which nothing happened.

In this project something happened which enabled a resumption, rather than a consumption, of the history of Les Halles.

*Text*

Up until the time of Louis XII there existed in France the institution of ‘asile,’ or sanctuary. This sanctuary was the hap-hazard margin of error in a pathetically error-prone judicial system. If a fugitive from justice entered upon a place designated as sanctuary the authorities were powerless to remove him, or her. Though usually confined to church buildings or palaces, there were cases in which whole towns (such as Paris in 1467), whose populations had been decimated by war or disease, were granted temporary rights of sanctuary for as long as it took to replenish the citizenry.

There is architectural evidence of the impact of sanctuary on medieval life. At Notre Dame, for instance, there was ‘un cellule établie sur les combles des bas côtés, sous les arc-boutants,’ that is, a cell, constructed over one of the side aisles, under the flying buttresses, to accommodate any who gained sanctuary there. These fugitives in their turn became part of the architectural presence of Notre Dame.

*Program*

The four flying buttresses on the south side of St. Eustache, between the main facade and the transept, were extended 90 feet into the site. The spacing of these buttresses established the rhythm (construction grid) for that which appears in this sector.

A small cell was constructed within the two extended buttresses closest to the transept. This cell, exposed as it is 30 feet above Paris, accommodates those who gain sanctuary within the walls of the one place it exists. For, to sanctify a new age in the life of Les Halles, the government granted permanent rights of sanctuary to the Cathedral of St. Eustache alone.

There is however a price to be paid by those of the accused of France who secure this immunity from the police. The walls of the cell, if not its inhabitants, are within plain sight of the people of Paris. And both are within hailing distance, so that judicial immunity countered by perpetual public judgement marks sanctuary at St. Eustache.

*Program*

The buttresses of St. Eustache established the rhythm of the Public Monument. They also describe the transitions, between indoor and out, sectarian and secular, that bond these two complementary structures. The Monument is designed specifically for the spectacle of the spectators, and consists of a series of terraces, steps and bridges, leading down to a pool of water. This pool is sheared, on a line with the lower (north-south) bridge by a 6 foot weir. Waterfalls break from beneath either end of the upper (east-west) bridge. An elevator, rising into the base of the new tower of St. Eustache, provides auxiliary access to all levels of the Public Monument.

*“Le temps est l’architecte,  
Le peuple est le macon.”*

The structure of the Public Monument is of stone, quarried from a French mountain in such a calculated manner as to have left in its place a monumental public resort, ‘à la montagne.’

The first stage of construction entailed all the actual ‘building’; all the rough stone was put in place, establishing the major and minor proportional systems of the Monument. In the next stage, all the carving was carried out, in situ. This carving, which invested in the Monument its human scale and texture, was designed and executed bay by bay, by master masons or by struggling artists, whoever could best be afforded at any particular time. The rough stonework set the parameters necessary for overall homogeneity, while the carving, which took a hundred years, ensured variety on the scale at which it could best be appreciated.

Vendors range freely throughout the Public Monument, with a concentration established beneath awnings at the base of the circular Stock Exchange. No business licenses have been issued, and no ‘terrace restaurants’ interfere with the democracy of the Monument.

Ice-skating is possible during winter months. And doctors and therapists prescribe a daily walk down and up the steps of the Public Monument for those of their heart-troubled patients who work or live in the quarter.

## Saint Eustache

*Text*

On the north-west border of the site stands the Cathedral of St. Eustache, ignored or disdained by centuries of architectural historians. Begun in 1532, work was suspended in 1637 (at the time of its consecration), not to be resumed until the 1700’s. The building which resulted from this 200 year time lapse was eclectic, if not catholic, in style. Gothic in plan and structural intent, the main facade (the south tower of which was left unbuilt) and the carving were rendered in the Neo-Classical manner. Fortunately the architectural history of St. Eustache does not constitute its only or most important history. There was, in fact, enough historical pith buried in its walls to generate a new and sound life for the quarter.

The Pompidou Center to the east of the site reminds us that, even in the 20th century, buildings were still named after the individuals who inspired them. Since much of what has happened at Les Halles was inspired by a contemporaneous and vastly popular re-interpretation of the story of the saint, Eustache, that story is integral to ours.

Eustache, a soldier of the Roman empire, enjoyed hunting when he wasn’t fighting. One day while stalking game in the forests near Tivoli he came upon a stag, a twelve-time trophy. He aimed his weapon and prepared to fire, but the animal stood his ground. It was then that Eustache supposed he saw a luminous cross nestled in those twelve point antlers, and he had his revelation. Whether the cross inspired the revelation or the revelation the cross is now of little interest. We know a revelation occurred because Eustache lowered his weapon and allowed the deer its freedom, while accepting his own. The path had been clear, the power at hand, but suddenly there was choice, offering restraint and generosity where there had previously been only prescription.

*Program*

The Catholic Church, threatened by dwindling membership, encouraged new ways of promoting culture and sought a new form of expression. The construction of the Cathedral of St. Eustache was completed in this spirit, and re-dedicated to the revelation (rather than the martyrdom) of the deer hunter, the influence of which can be felt throughout the western sector of the site.

The south tower of the main facade was built finally, at ground level, in a ‘place’ affording a view of that facade. Atop this tower stands a statue of St. Eustache, rifle poised, ready to aim. His eyes are fixed upon another statue, that of a glorious stag, mounted on the existing tower of the church facade. The deer hunter’s expression is captured at the moment of revelation, when his pre-conditioned responses have given way to personal choice and sense of purpose. The stag, with or without luminous cross, is accompanied and perhaps protected by an enigmatic woman.

## The Public Monument

“For many of the good people of Paris are quite content with the spectacle of the spectators—nay, even a wall behind which something is happening is to them an object of no little interest.”

*Text*

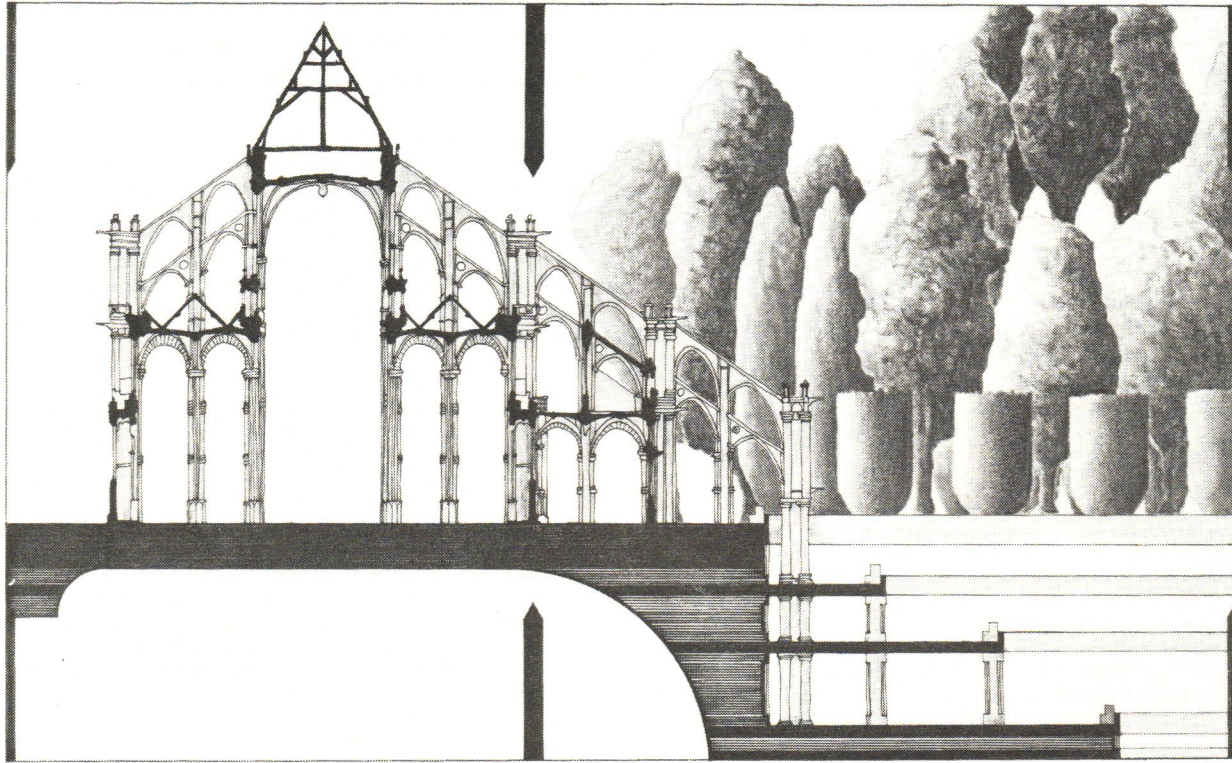
Who would disagree that Parisians are among the World’s most successful urbanists? Their success of course is undeniably linked to the nature and texture of their city, the disappearance of which could not be remedied or assuaged by ‘équipement.’ The excavation of the western sector of Les Halles afforded an opportunity to provide Parisians with *more* of their city, rather than the juxtaposition of new and irrelevant ‘theory’ on an historically self-sufficient neighborhood.

## Bosquet St. Eustache

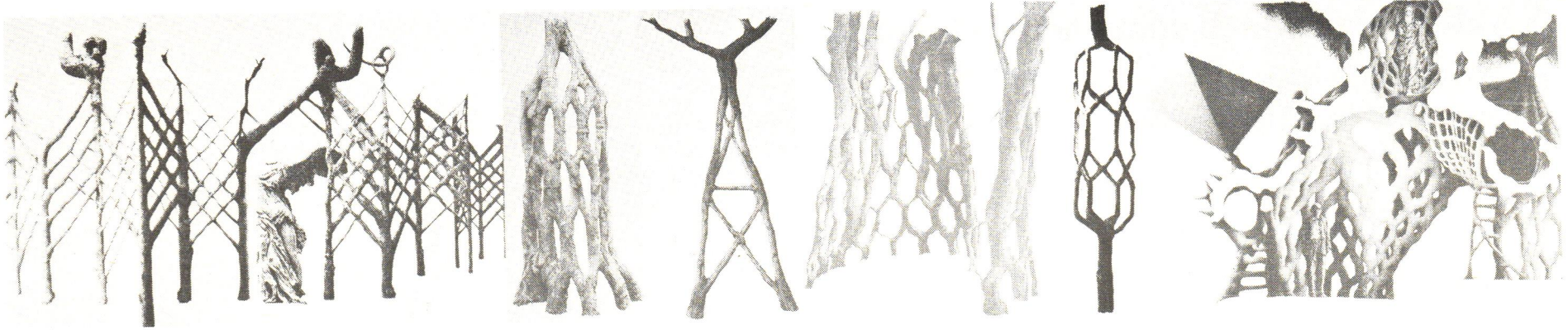
*Text*

The roofs of the underground facilities, both planned and realized, were meant to form the ‘ground’ from which a major urban statement would rise. Suitable as this ground may have seemed in terms of infrastructure for architectural superstructure, it raised grave questions when confronted with nature. For though it had been agreed by all that urban nature (i.e., parc, jardin, place) was to make a substantial appearance on the site, the integrity of that nature was consistently neglected. Artificiality of natural elements, the treatment and appreciation of which has its origins in the suburban shopping mall, was to permeate Les Halles.

Section through the Cathedral St. Eustache and the Public Monument with the Bosquet St. Eustache in the back.







Jardin des Arbres, a testing ground for Botanic Architecture.

In the city, the tree is a monument to the acknowledgement of a biological system more important than any of our own. It must therefore be rooted in the earth. A tree ceases to have meaning when it is maintained in a shallow box on an impervious surface; when, due to insufficient root spread and depth, its strength and durability must depend upon the use of guy wires; and when its potential grandeur and opulence of foliage are cheapened and stunted by people suffering from those same deficiencies.

#### Program

The area between the Public Monument and the rue Baltard was reserved, above and below ground level, for a two acre bosquet (grove of trees). There is nothing beneath the surface of this grove but good soil and good drainage.

Fifty-seven trees, representing 19 species, were selected for planting.<sup>1</sup> These trees, planted as seedlings, were brought to Paris from all parts of the world. While they were still young the ground was protected by a covering of thyme. These trees possess the two common prerequisites of greatness and longevity; they grow to a height of at least one hundred feet and live to an age of at least one hundred years.

A pedestrian bridge was constructed to span the bosquet so that Parisians may pass amid the branches of these giant trees, while leaving the forest floor untrampled. The Bosquet St. Eustache, surpassing as it does the imposed height restriction of the quarter, has grown to attain and to counterpoint the monumentality of the adjacent cathedral, and to rise majestically from the Public Monument. The cathedral and the grove stand together as a welcome and unmistakable landmark of the Paris skyline.

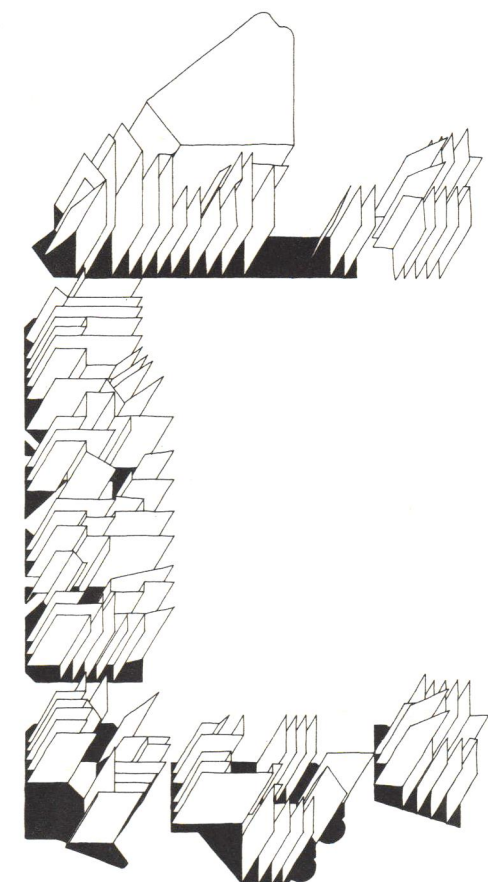
#### Mur Mitoyen (Party Wall)

“Lack of space imposed a special way of life on the people of Paris. Whenever there is overpopulation, social specialization is impossible; there can be no poor quarters and no prosperous quarters, merely a teeming throng of humanity where all classes are heaped together, pell mell. One and the same building will accommodate an aristocratic household in the depths of a quiet, almost provincial courtyard, dark shops on the noisy streetside, and numerous apartments and rented rooms—some respectable, others miserable. Each city block is thus a complex microcosm, a sample of urban society in all its variations of birth and fortune.”

—from ‘Paris Divided,’ Phillipe Aries.

#### Text

The architectural and social structures of Paris from the two sides of a specific urban coin, the stamp of which can be discerned in the nature and scale of the property divisions within city blocks. The borders, or street facades, of these blocks may



Mur

<sup>1</sup>The are: Lombardy Poplar (16), Irish Yew (10), European Beech (2), Pecan (2), White Pine (1), Ponderosa Pine (2), English Oak (2), Chestnut (2), Tulip Tree (2), Italian Stone Pine (2), Black Heart Cherry (2), Sugar Maple (1), Nyssa (1), Douglas Fir (3), Silver Linden (2), English Elm (1), Cryptomeria (2), Cedar of Lebanon (1), and White Ash (3).

present a more or less solid wall to the pedestrian, but these walls define an arena into which real light and real air must penetrate. Within interwoven property lines that have slowly evolved to appear arbitrary or fortuitous, each building plays off its neighbor to create livable and sometimes private spaces which run the gamut of desirability and application. This was the desired ‘fabric’ or ‘texture’ of Paris—buildings within party walls; party walls within city blocks.

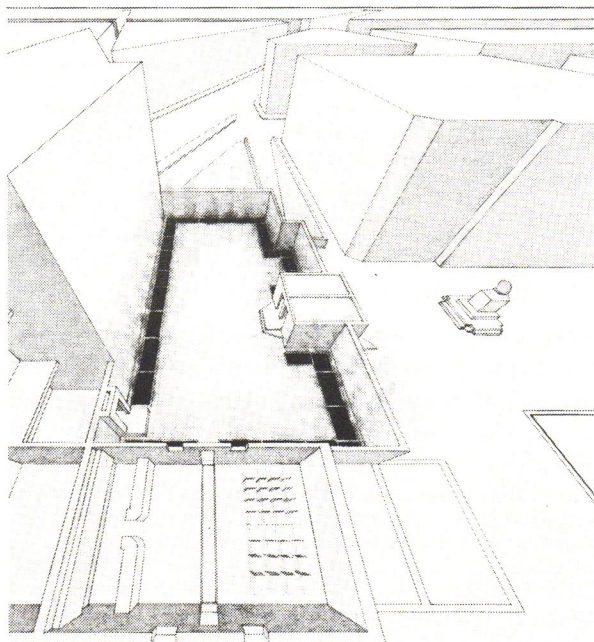
#### Program

The rue Baltard divides the site into two sectors. The western sector has already been described; the eastern sector had already been developed, subterraneously, and dedicated to the consumer/tourist. The revised redevelopment scheme situated all new ‘buildings’ in this sector, within party walls.

These party walls were adumbrations, that is, shadows or outlines that defined the limits of each of the 90 properties they created. Though public easements pass at will through party walls, private developments do not; this is true in the vertical direction as well. With the exception of the southeasterly block which mirrors the old block to its north, the 75 foot height restriction stands unviolated by elevator penthouses, television aerials, water tanks, H, V, or AC systems, anything but chimneys. Nestled in among this technological flotsam, garret apartments have reappeared as low-income alternatives to social segregation.

The creation of 90 building sites in the center of Paris presented an unequaled opportunity for the same number of architects to tackle difficult multi-use projects. Seemingly arbitrary in configuration and orientation, the party walls offered a broad range of scale and activity within and among individual properties. And because fresh air and natural light were steadfast requirements, the architectural solutions were as diverse as the properties themselves.

Running along the east side of the main block of the Party Wall, and connecting the north and south wings, a public concourse serves as a major pedestrian street, while acting as a visual cordon containing the activities of the eastern sector of the site.



Court of Mircales, an informal center for the truards (bums) of Paris.

#### The Court of Miracles

“*C’était une vaste place, irrégulière et mal pavée. . . .*”

#### Text

At the end of the rue de la Petite Truanderie, where the HVAC ‘building’ now stands, was the medieval site of the Court of Miracles. The word ‘Truanderie’ refers to the nation of ‘truands,’ the beggars, thieves and vagabonds who ranged the streets of Paris. The ‘court’ was a sheltering section of the old wall of Paris and the ‘miracle’ was that, upon entering, the blind could see again and the lame walk, after a day spent begging alms. The court was granted jurisdictional sovereignty by the authorities and its inhabitants left to govern themselves.

#### Program

Public restrooms stand at the end of the rue de la Petite Truanderie. Passing through either male or female side, one enters the Court of Miracles, a walled, 1/3 acre clearing which serves as the unofficial center for the truands of Paris. The Court of Miracles is governed by none but its inhabitants. ‘Charitable’ organizations are prohibited by law from entering the court.

The only feature of the court, other than its proximity to rest rooms, public house and consumer/tourists, is a metal grating set into the paving stones along its four walls. Through this grating warm air is discharged at night and during winter months from the subterranean facilities of the Consumer Forum.

The Court of Miracles affords nothing but a warm place out of the public eye for those Parisians who ask for nothing more.

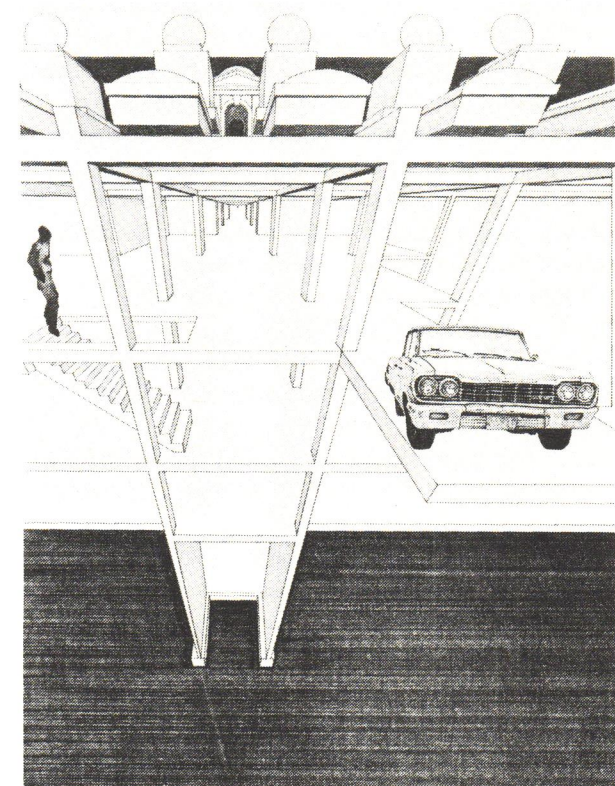
#### Aux Sonneurs Pour Les Trépassés (Ringers For The Dead)

#### Text

Adjacent to and serving the original Court of Miracles was a public house whose signboard depicted dead chickens and newly minted coins. This den of thieves was the birthplace of conspiracies and duplicities, where criminals were recruited, stolen goods fenced, and children sold or ransomed. Something was always bending sinister behind the unadorned walls of the ‘Aux Sonneurs Pour Les Trépassés.

#### Program

The new ‘Ringers For The Dead,’ situated within the party wall and adjacent to the Court of Miracles, is state subsidized to allow the serving of the cheapest drinks in Paris. This in itself maintains its immense popularity and its uncommon mix of ‘types.’ The only apparent effort toward decoration is a one-step declivity running down the center of the room as an architectonic sobriety test.



Le Cimetiere des Saint-Innocents is located above four stories of parking. At left a shade of occupancy.

#### Le Cimetière des Saint-Innocents

#### Text

The Fountain of the Holy Innocents stands on the site of what was for hundreds of years the only sanctified burial ground in Paris. The Cimetière des Saint-Innocents was never very large and always overcrowded. The dead were packed in three and four deep and, when no more soil could be found, charnel houses were erected in which to pile the bodies. A wall kept the dogs out but could not contain the odors, which mixed unfavorably with those of the food markets next door.

In 1750, in anticipation of the establishment of a permanent market in the quarter, evacuation of the cemetery began. Every night the fragments of the dead were excavated and carted off to their next final resting place. For months the people living between Saint-Innocent on the Right Bank and the Roman catacombs at Montparnasse on the Left Bank slept to the nocturne of the cartwheels of the dead passing beneath their windows. When the job was finished, two million past Parisians had been evicted from the Cemetery of the Holy Innocents.

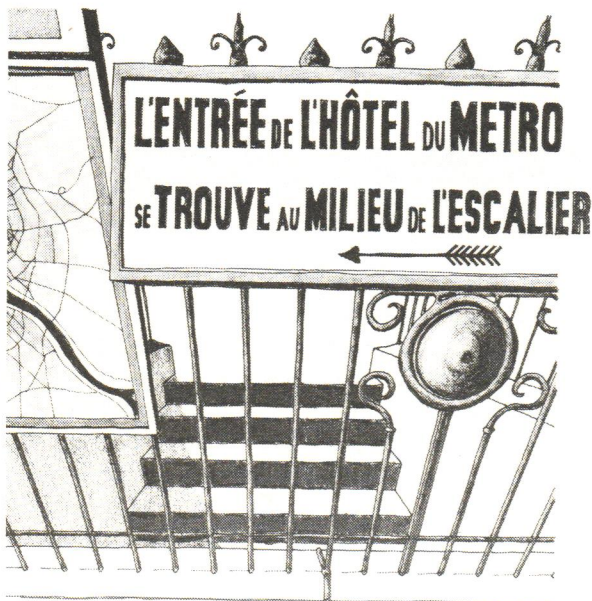
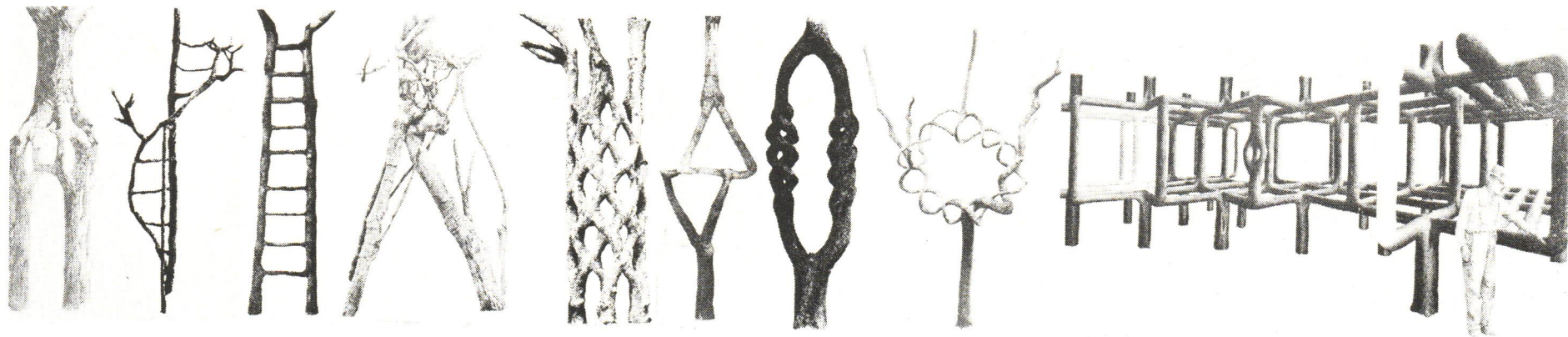
#### Program

Nothing establishes the permanence of a place like a cemetery. To provide an immediate sense of perpetuity to the resumption of Les Halles, the Cimetière des Saint-Innocents was resurrected, at a smaller scale, on its original site. The cemetery forms part of the Place de la Fontaine des Innocents.

The fact that the cemetery is located above four stories of parking and mechanical facilities did not prevent it from being a much sought-after resting place for the developers of Paris, who had consistently failed to make the distinction between ‘terra firma’ and ‘firmament.’ In fact the demand was so great and the plots so few, that in the end it was popular demand that decided who, among those who seemed to desire such position, should attain the honor of being buried in ‘le ventre de Paris.’

Mark Primack practices architecture in Santa Cruz, California. He is involved in the resurrection of the “World Famous Tree Circus, a living roadside attraction” in the Santa Cruz Mountains.





Hotel Metro, a low budget 300 room hotel in the heart of Paris.

## Hotel Metro

*Text*  
Les Halles, one of the great (and free) tourist attractions of Paris, removed to make room for a tourist hotel? Only a bureaucrat could dream such a thing. But large hotels, like large bureaucracies, are self-serving, and have a special affinity for one another. So although 300-room, 3-star hotels had proven themselves a particularly disagreeable building type, such a thing was deemed essential to the commercialization of the site.

A building of this size could never pretend to be 'on the scale' or 'in the fabric' of the neighborhood and was at first declared irreconcilable to the concerns of the final plan. But a somewhat suspicious official insistence on a hotel for the site led eventually to a compromise that no public servant dared oppose. The miracle of a large hotel that was neither eyesore nor social or physical imposition was achieved, but at the cost of three stars.

### Program

The Hotel Metro, a government-run low-budget 300-room no-star hotel in the heart of Paris, was built underground, within the previously constructed south-eastern sector. The two main entrances were modeled after typical turn-of-the-century metro station entries, the tourist appeal of which is unavoidable.

The rooms themselves are decidedly minimal; showers are down the hall. The only concession to luxury is the camera obscura. For unlike even the most prestigious of Parisian hotels, every room in the Hotel Metro has a superb view.

The camera obscura consists of a series of lenses and mirrors that channel the view of the eastern sector of the site, with its Jardin des Arbres and aviary, down and around until it comes to rest in a 'window' in each room. The image is as sharp as any viewed through a lens or in a mirror, and, being non-electronic, it is 'real' in a sense that video is not.

The modest traveller has once again found safe accommodation in the center of Paris and, for the first time perhaps, has a magnificent view. The Hotel Metro hosts a new breed of tourists who bear their share of the responsibility for preserving that which they have come to enjoy.

## Institute of the Commuting Ornithologist

### Text

The Consumer Forum revealed its concave face to the city, begging sunlight while avoiding exposure. Its subterranean court postured as a public monument, but its walls were windows which rendered any human action self-conscious or contrived. Like specimens in a zoo, the consumer/tourists who flocked there constituted their own captive audience.

### Program

The courtyard of the Consumer Forum was evacuated and sealed off; the pedestrian route connecting its three levels was contained within a transparent vault. As the courtyard was, in terms of movement alone, dead space, this closure did not upset circulation patterns within the Forum.

The courtyard was then covered by a steel and glass structure similar to those employed in the Baltard pavilions of the earlier markets. The space thus enclosed was densely landscaped, with a banyan tree (*Ficus Bengalensis*) planted at the topmost level. The stilts that this tree produces were encouraged to proliferate and spread, so that the banyan became quite large, while its weight was evenly distributed across the courtyard, which is itself a roof.

The courtyard was then ready to serve a purpose more harmonious to its character, that of a tropical aviary housing a hundred species of rare and exotic birds. Unlike others this aviary has a huge and extremely regular patronage, consisting of workers commuting daily to and from their city jobs.

In the course of circulating past the aviary twice a day, these commuters have each decided upon a favorite specimen that they will search out, identify and briefly study as they jostle past. Over the years these diurnal observations have, in some cases, led to a rich empirical cognizance which, when augmented by a little extracurricular research, has occasionally resulted in significant advances in the field of ornithology. A new wave of amateur ornithologists has appeared whose members have nothing more in common than that they commute to work.

## Jardin Des Arbres

### Text

The overall concern of the eastern sector of the Les Halles site for the rehabilitation of the consumer/tourist is nowhere more focused than in the Garden of Trees, situated to the north and south of the aviary and eastward to the edge of the site at rue Lescot.

Gardens can cost as little as nothing and can exist within walking distance of most everyone in the world. The Jardin des Arbres at Les Halles presents an inspiring alternative to the consumptive behavior that was originally choreographed for the site; an alternative that can be pursued wherever in the world there is still uncovered earth. The trees grown here have by example offered a channel for human effort unparalleled in beneficence, endurance, and providence.

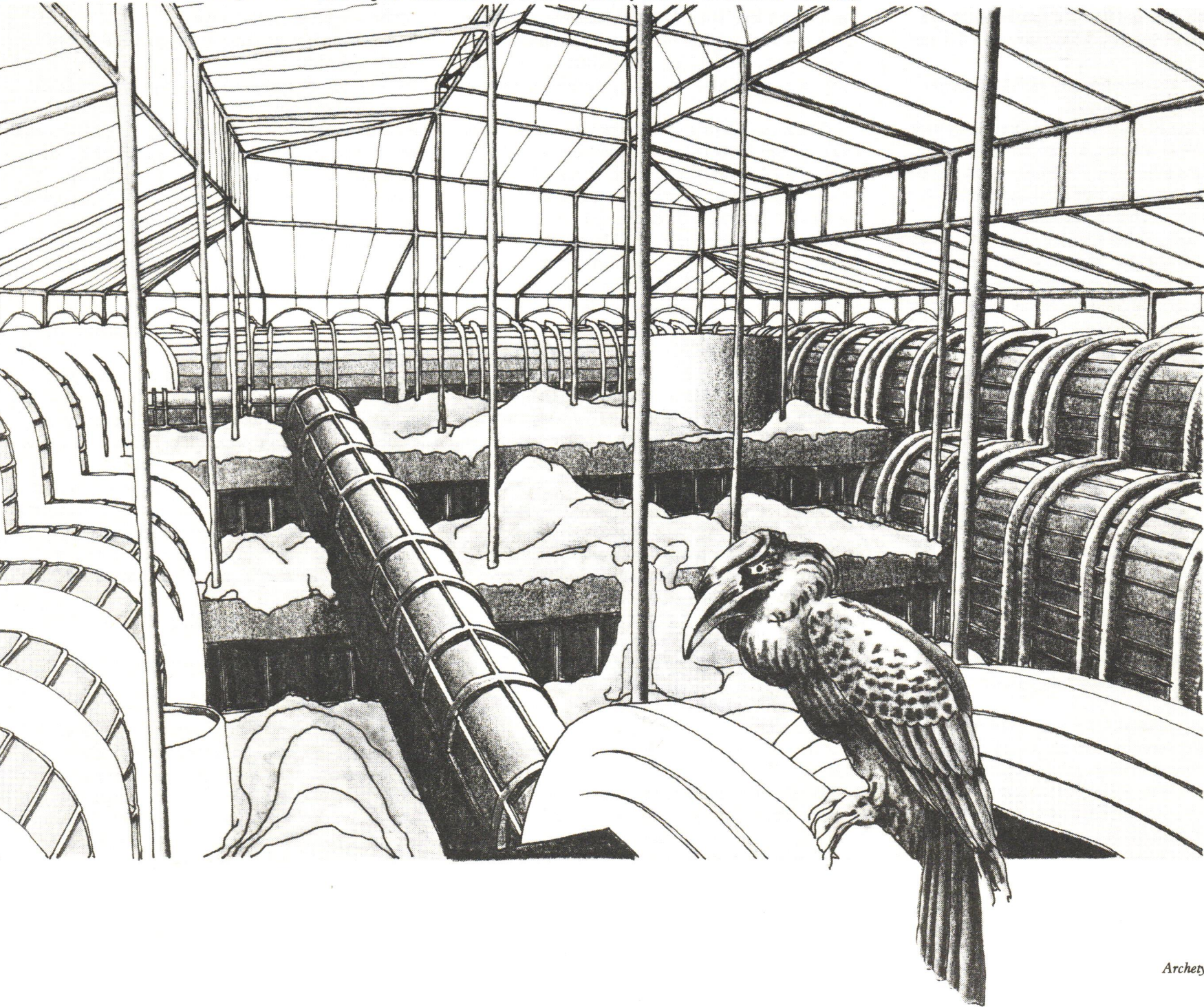
### Program

The Garden of Trees is a testing ground for Botanic Architecture. The first 15 feet of each tree's growth, trunk and limb, has been bent and grafted to form complex architectural elements. The second 15 feet of the tree's growth involved the pleaching of branches to form a dense and uniform canopy over the entire garden. Designed into this pleaching is the provision of access for those who tend the trees.

The Jardin des Arbres has become the top and final level of the Consumer Forum, continuing the imposed column grid up into the city. An array of hedges opens and closes vistas, articulates the emergency exists of the Forum, and defines the limits and recesses of the Garden. ●

## Mark Primack

Institute of the Commuting Ornithologist under a steel and glass structure similar to the 19th century structure of Les Halles Pavilions.





# Luis Barragan

*Entering architect Luis Barragan's house in Tacubaya, I found myself enveloped in an environment of order and tranquility that contrasted sharply to the bustle of Mexico City life. His house is an example of extreme austerity and purity.*

## I N T E R V I E W

*For this interview, Barragan and I met in his library. He was seated on a large sofa surrounded by books and pictures of horses (his favorite animal), and the motif of one of his projects (Los Clubes). His figure—serene, slender and stylized—is reminiscent of a classical gentleman.*

*Due to my Spanish background, the interview was conducted in Castillian Spanish which gave our exchanges a more fluid and direct character by allowing Barragan to speak freely in his native tongue. Barragan began the conversation by speaking of European architecture and its resurgence in the last ten years. He immediately emphasized the Pompidou Center in Paris, commenting that France had created a new architectural milestone as it had with the Eiffel Tower earlier this century.*

*This Interview was conducted by Jorge Salvat on July 1, 1980.*

**Barragan:** It is interesting to see the effect this kind of building produces on its surroundings, specifically classical Paris. One must analyze whether concentration on reading and studying is possible in these kinds of buildings. It is impossible to judge the architectural success of a building simply by the amount of people that visit it. In the case of the Pompidou Center, for instance, factors like novelty, rarity, and tourist curiosity are closely related to publicity. One does not know if this building is a success or an anti-success. I have not visited it and thus I cannot judge.

**Archetype:** What contemporary building do you consider the most interesting?

**B:** I consider the El Camino Real Hotel by Ricardo Legoretta, here in Mexico, a very interesting experience. It is a five story building which emphasizes courts and gardens, calmness and the ability to traverse it by foot. That is, the entire space is accessible by foot, rather than up elevators—though they were not forgotten. At first, in fact, it was thought that avoiding the concept of the tower as an image in a modern building would be harmful, but now it is clear that this type of design is very successful, especially in countries like Mexico with warm climates, where people can walk around freely and utilize all spaces year round.

**A:** What importance do you give to calmness and serenity in architectural spaces?

**B:** I believe it is important that spaces not be aggressive. I have always used primary forms and worked with right angles. Horizontal and vertical planes and the angles at which they intersect have always been important considerations in my work. This explains my recurrent use of the cube.

**A:** Why don't you use the curve in your designs?

**B:** I do not know how to use curves. It is very difficult to work with curved spaces; one cannot place furniture against them, for example.

**A:** What characteristics define the ideal space for you?

**B:** I think that the ideal space must contain elements of magic, serenity, sorcery and mystery. I believe that human beings at heart are inspired by such things. It seems essential to create this atmosphere even in the cities. The urban dweller needs a refuge against the crowd; the park solution appears to be the most suitable.

**A:** What importance do you give to color in your architecture?

**B:** In my architecture, both color and light have

been fundamental constants. One as well as the other is a basic factor in the creation of an architectural environment since they can change the concept of space. In my project for the Chapel for the Capuchinas Sacramentarias del Purisimo Corazon de Maria, for example, I very carefully studied light as well as color since I wanted to create an atmosphere of spiritual absorption and quiet. The notion of semi-darkness was very important in this project. I especially emphasize the study of color. Before deciding the exact color I will use, I make several tests to see their effect, studying samples in small and large panels, and evaluating the results.

**A:** Is the Mexican architectural tradition used by the new generation of architects? That is, are qualities of the vernacular tradition, such as simplicity, courtyards, and the elements of color and light still significant for our new generation of Mexican architects?

**B:** Yes, there is a group of architects that still use this tradition.

**A:** Do you consider yourself a pioneer of popular Mexican architecture?

**B:** Popular Mexican architecture is beautiful and colorful. My interest is to apply the *sense* of this architecture to modern architecture. Mexico has one of the most important "modern spirits" of the world, which is reflected in areas like that of the University City. These are representative buildings of the modern spirit in Mexico which capture the sense of popular Mexican architecture in their vast Byzantine-like murals depicting traditional Mexican life.

I do not consider myself an innovator. In a lecture I gave in San Francisco, someone asked me why the International Style is done more in Mexico, where there is such a strong vernacular tradition, than in the United States. To be traditional is to do the architecture of the epoch. The Mayas practiced Mayan architecture, the colonialists colonial architecture. If we imitate foreign or past architecture we are practicing anti-traditional architecture. International architecture opposes traditional architecture. Many examples exist of the use by architects of foreign traditions. In the United States, for instance, particularly Los Angeles, the Californian colonial, the French style with its mansards, the Arabian style combined with the Hollywoodian impulse, all create a ridiculous architectural collage. Here, in the Las Lomas section of Mexico, a similar situation exists: the prevalent French influence only makes the inferiority complex of this kind of architectural solution more noticeable.

Imagination is very important in architecture.

I disagree with certain rigid schools that restrict an architect's creativity. A good example of this creative potential is the work of the architect, Antoni Gaudi. Although I do not like all of his work, I like his integration of the concept of nature in his architecture—Gaudi consistently imitates the forms of nature in his designs.

**A:** Is there a solution to urban sprawl—specifically in Mexico City?

**B:** There is no solution to the chaos of life in Mexico. There are big infrastructure problems that bring with them associated problems of water, electricity and fluid circulation in general.

**A:** What solution in terms of urban design do you see for this problem?

**B:** What will happen to the cities is unknown. Fifty

years ago, the provincial man made his fortune and went to the city; the same man once established in the city created his second house in the country to leave the city. With this, a "contradiction" is established. Another example is the "vacation concept." Because of the loneliness that invades people in the city, they have to leave it and go to the country to cure themselves of this solitude, and later they can no longer endure the country because of the same problem and they have to return to the city.

**A:** What do you think is the most effective urban design solution?

**B:** I think that regarding urbanization, Houston is an example of a very well organized city. (Barragan's preference for Houston over all American cities is a formal one, and particularly interesting in view of the fact that it is the one example of American urban concentration which lacks the 'benefit' of zoning).

**A:** What do you think of the value crisis in architecture—functionalism for example?

**B:** Functionalism has lost its value; people take it as physical functionalism and not as spiritual functionalism. Man needs his spiritual necessities to be satisfied. Man needs isolation. The crowd is in contraposition to the individual mind's functions.

**A:** How could you define your work methodology? What things inspire your work?

**B:** I work a great deal by intuition and by observation—reading and in travel.

**A:** What were your impressions on your visit to Spain and Morocco?

**B:** With the exception of Paris, Spain interests me more than any other place. The sight of the Alhambra in Granada with its spaces, fountains and water channels affected me greatly. I would define these spaces as magical. In the case of Morocco, I was greatly impressed by the Casbah. Its plain walls speak of a very agreeable interior life. It is very interesting to notice the integration of this kind of architecture with the landscape. It is difficult to define where the Casbah ends and the landscape begins because there is such an effective fusion.

**A:** What importance do you assign to nature as a part of architecture?

**B:** I think it is necessary to integrate nature into architecture. I consider the idea of "going out to the garden" important, and essential to the interpenetration of nature in the building. (Barragan's house illustrates this important formal concept. A deceptively small garden made to look large and imposing in the courtyard adjacent to the house, is an integral element of the house's design.) An adequate treatment of these types of spaces is essential to avoid falling into the concept of the sad courts with just a few plants.

**A:** Could you tell me something about your latest work?

**B:** My most recent work is a one-family house in Tacubaya for F. Gilardi.

**A:** Could you characterize this house?

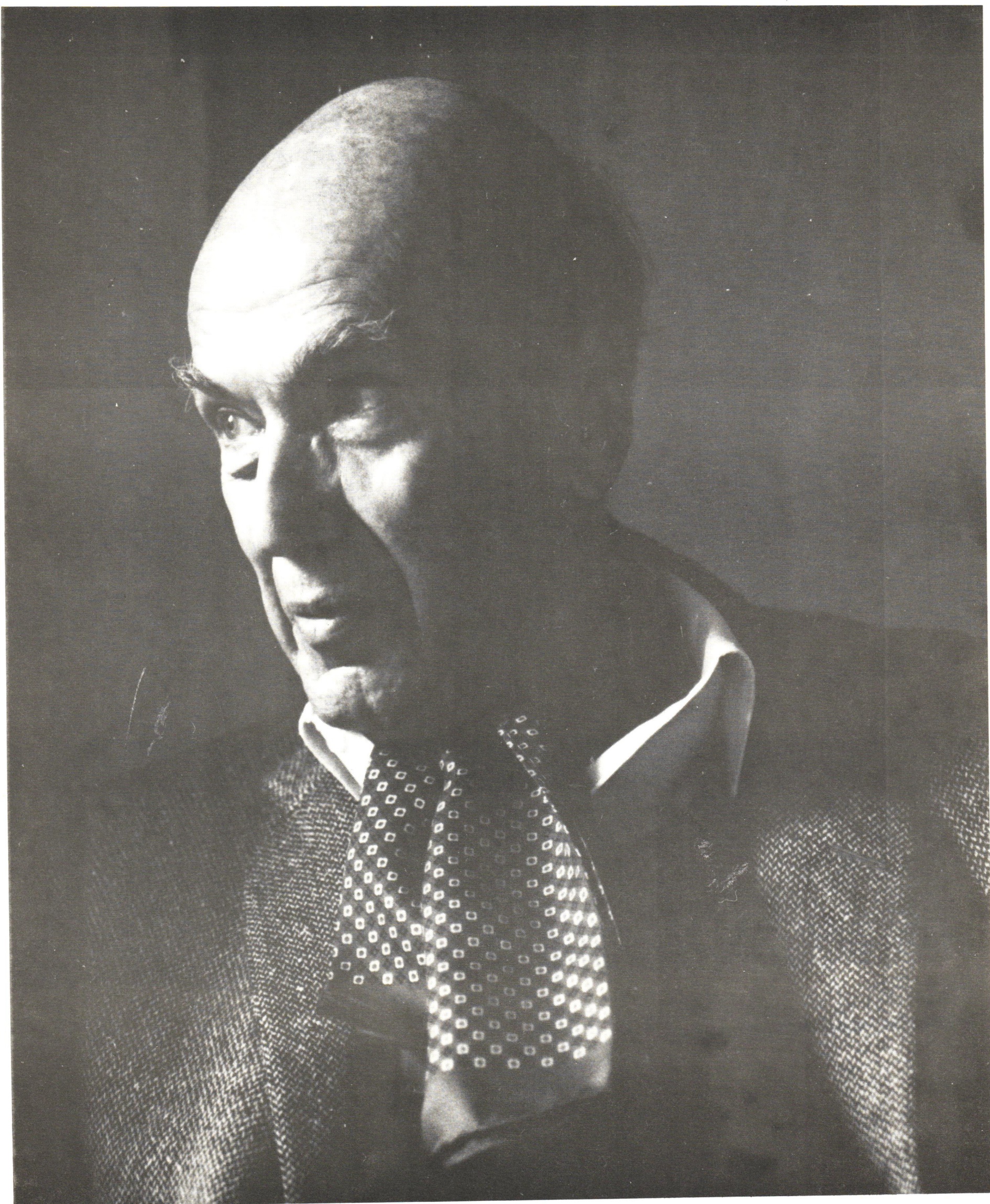
**B:** The most important characteristic of this work, besides the creation of a central court, is the existence of a covered swimming pool integrated with the house and directly connected to the dining room.

**A:** Finally, could you define the polemical relation between art-architecture and architecture-art?

When can you consider architecture an art?

**B:** In my opinion, when one consciously or unconsciously creates aesthetic emotion in the atmosphere, and when this environment produces well-being. ●





Luis Barragan, photograph by Alberto Gomez Barbosa



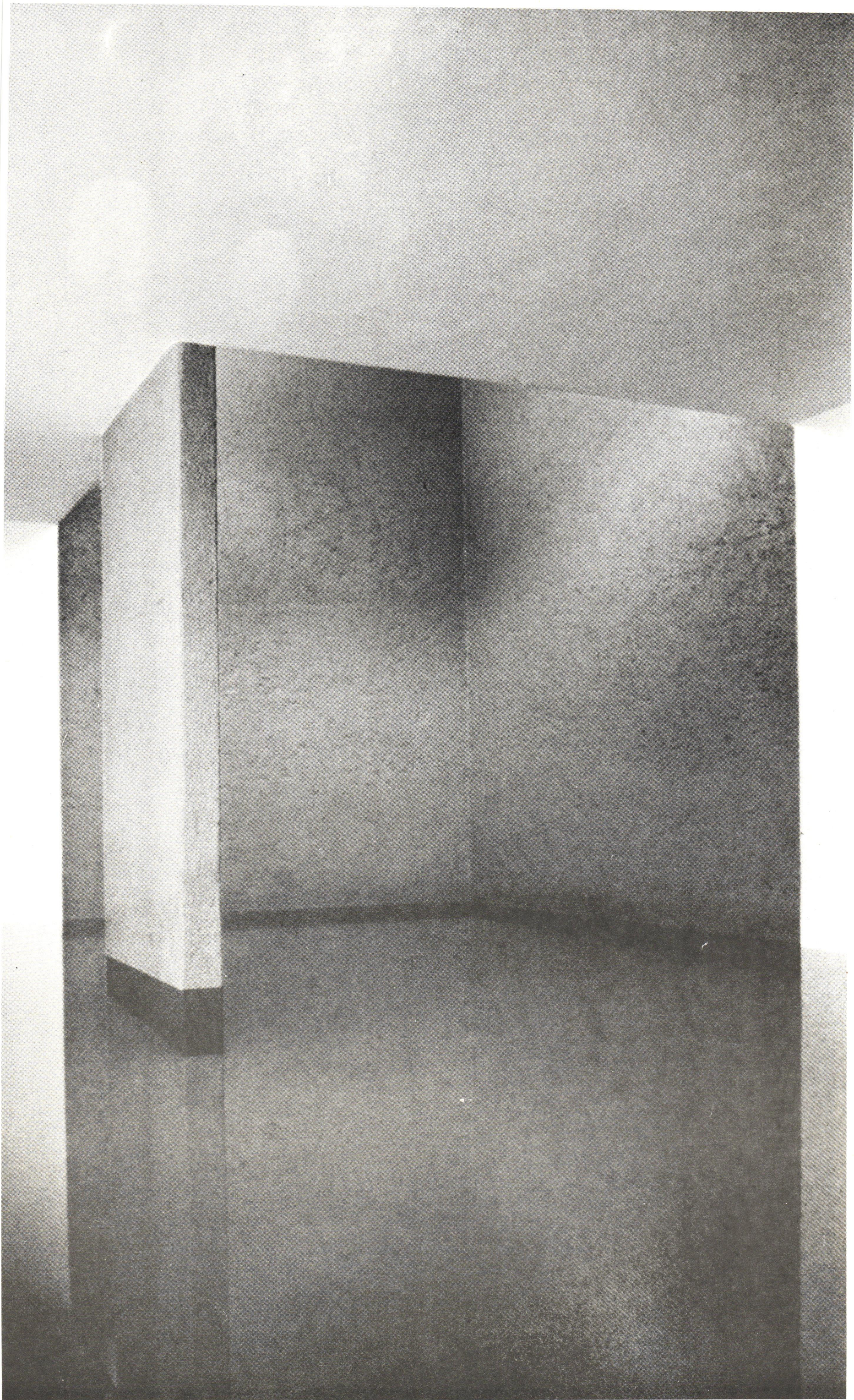
# The Gilardi House

Barragan's latest design incorporates and refines those design elements which he has evolved over 60 years to create his magical spaces.

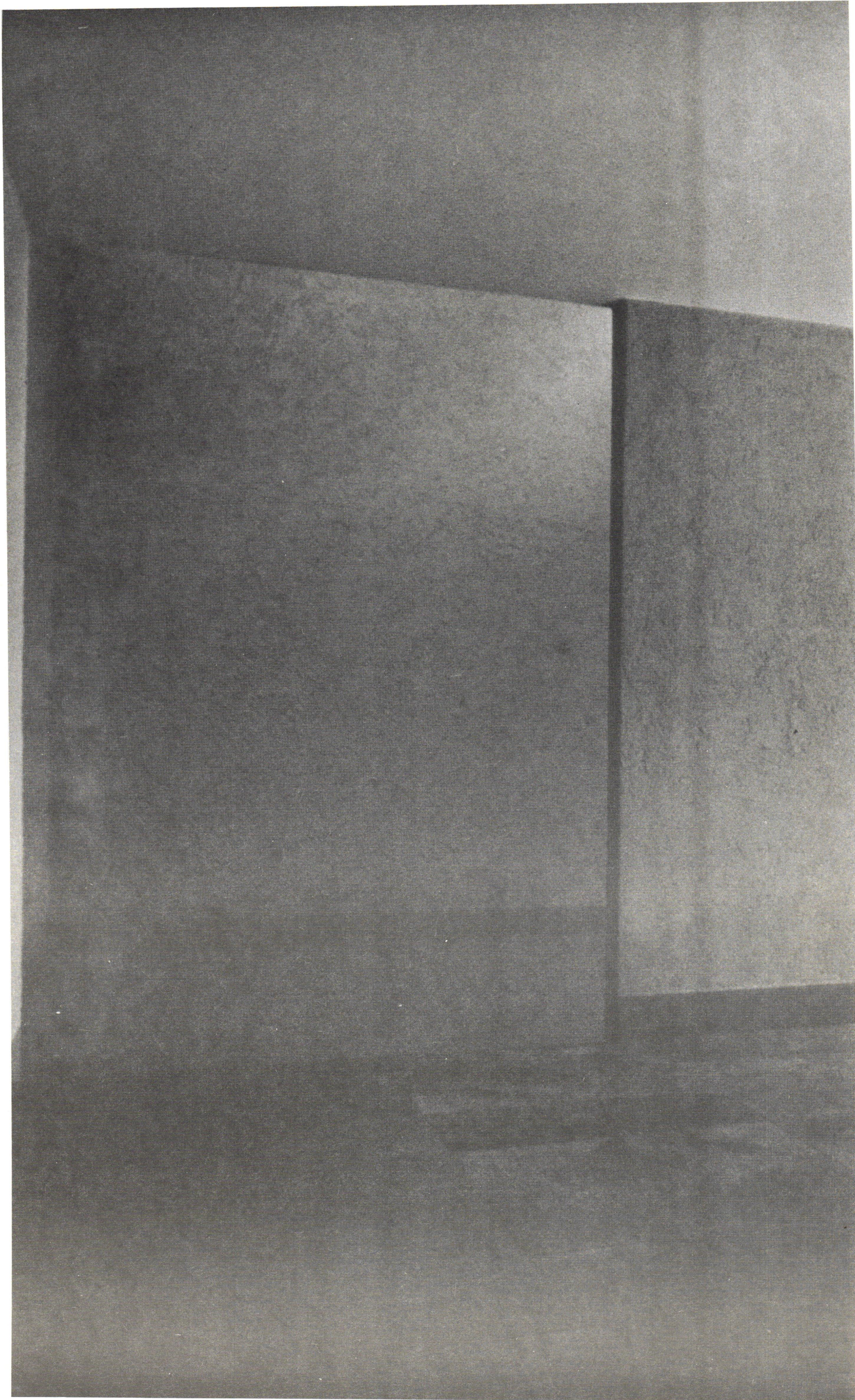
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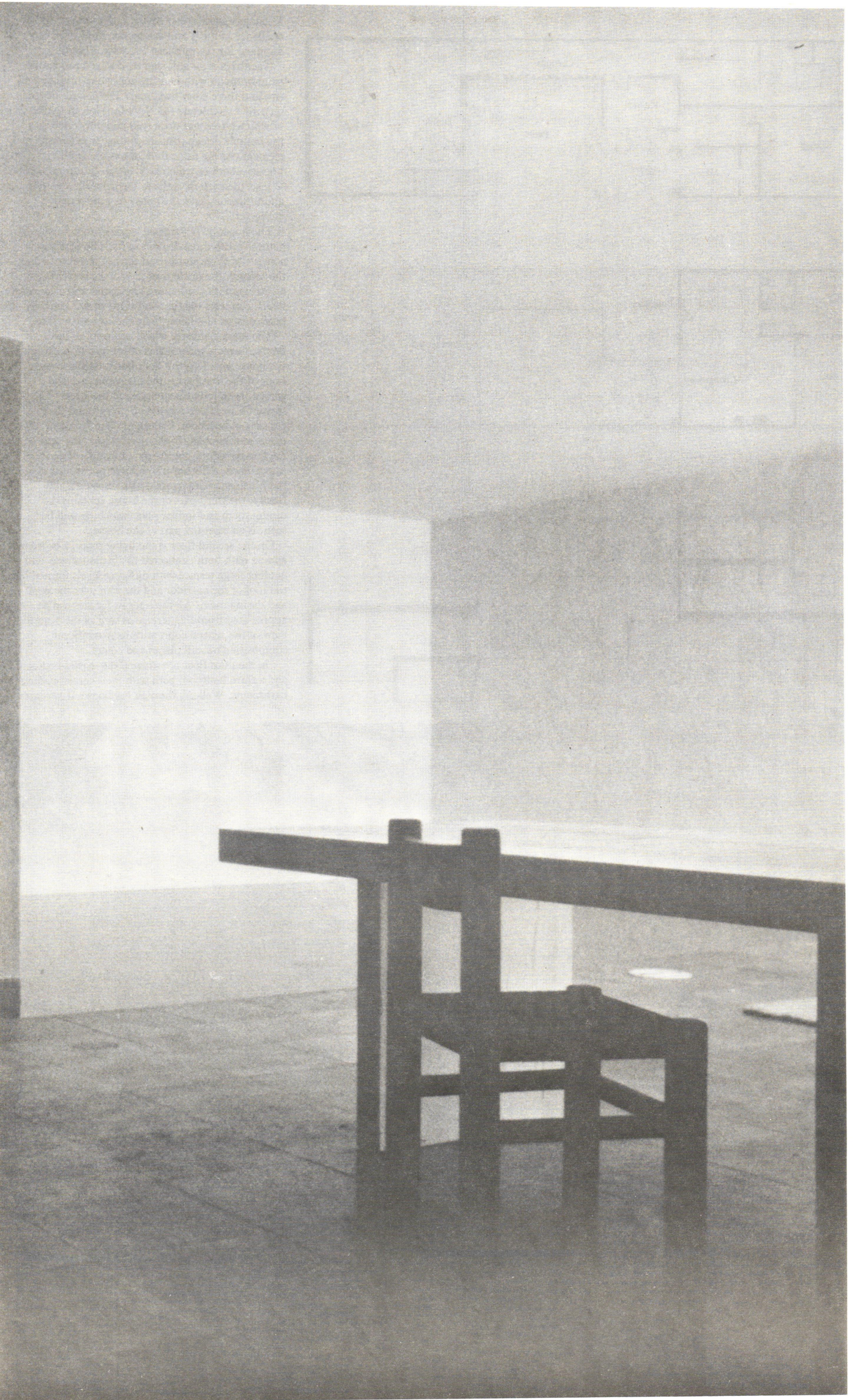




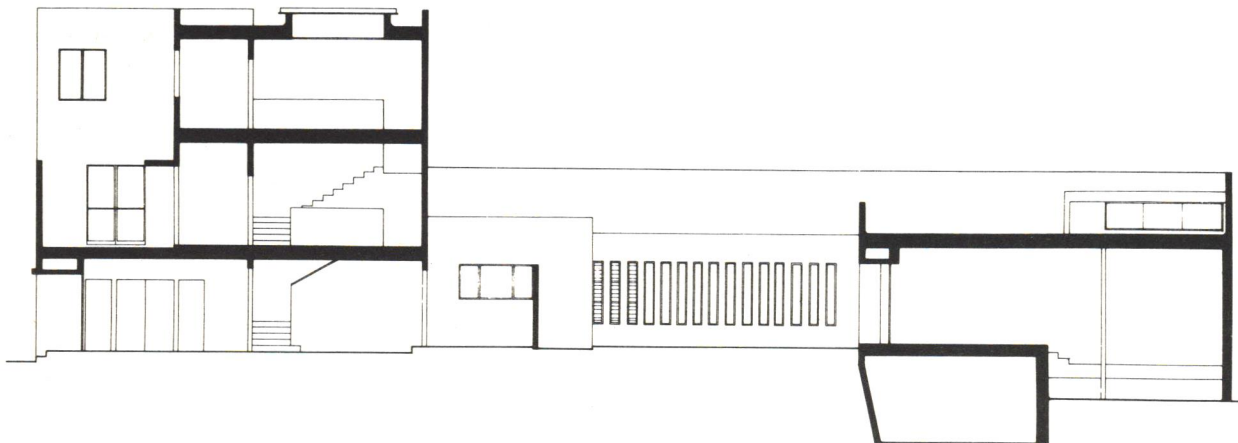
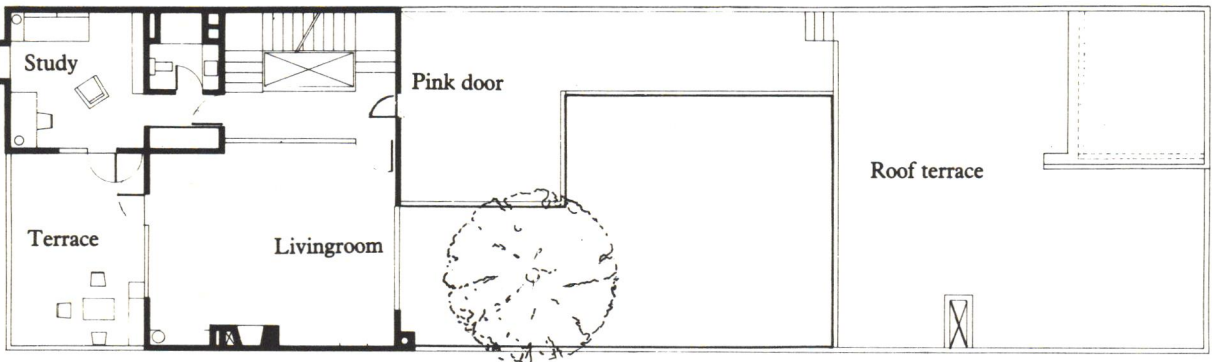
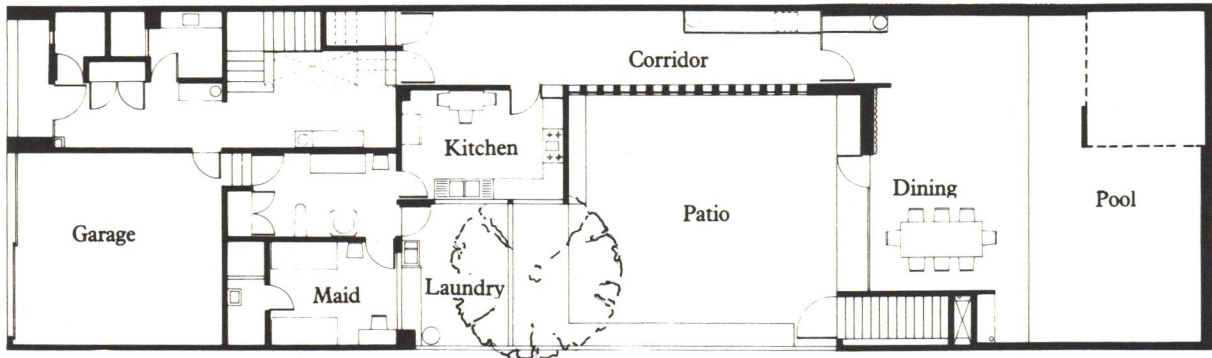












The latest work of Luis Barragan is a single family residence in the Tacubaya section of Mexico City, designed for the publicist Francisco Gilardi.

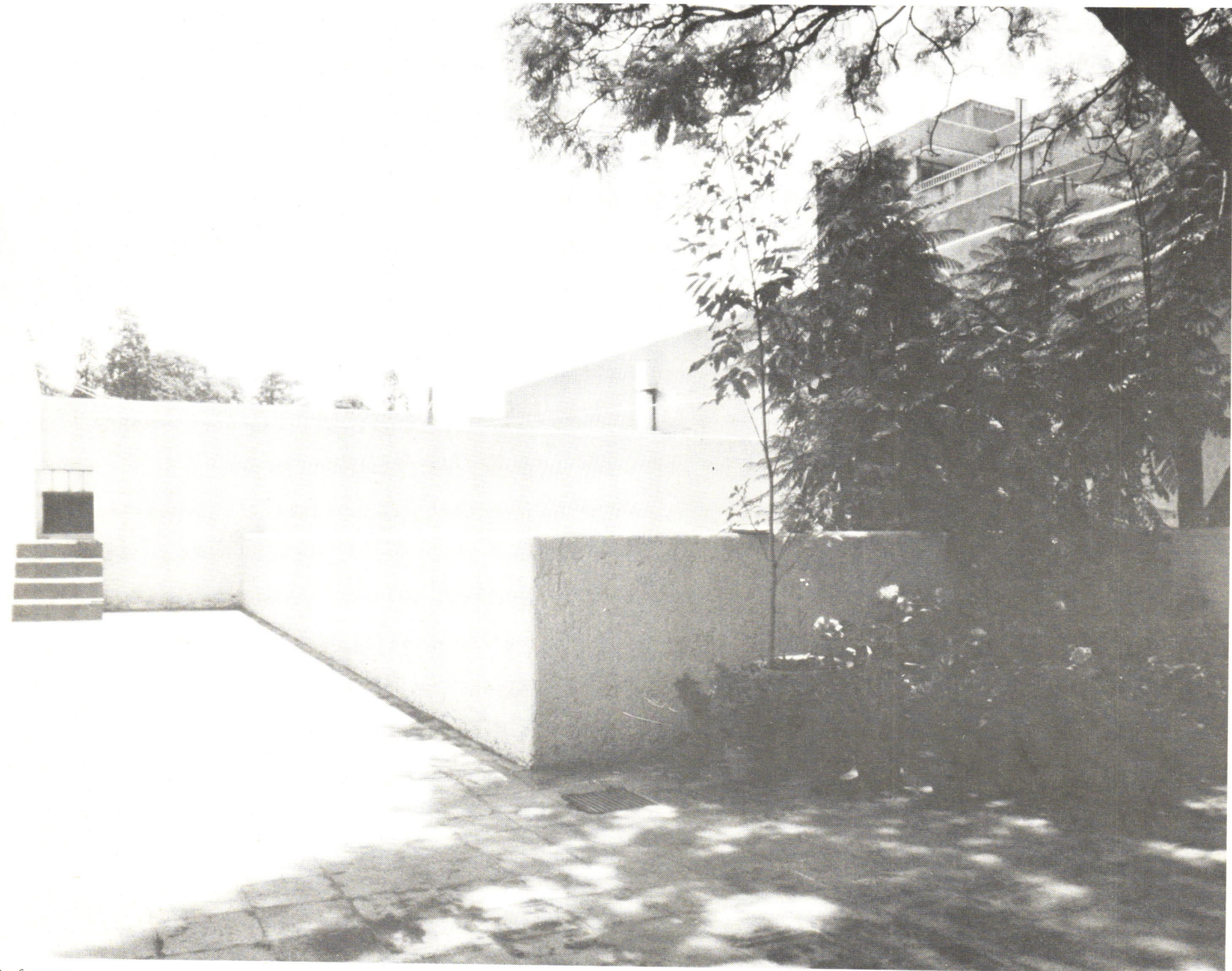
Tacubaya is an old, slightly decayed residential neighborhood with housing consisting primarily of two and three story dwellings. The Gilardi house is on a 10 x 30 meters (33 x 99 feet) lot, in the center of which a tree was preserved and integrated into the house's design, thus becoming an organizational element. At the same time, the two neighboring houses—both of which lack any architectural merit—lend their lateral walls to the new Gilardi structure and ultimately give the house its introverted character.

The house's "U"-shaped configuration divides it naturally into three distinct parts. The first part consists of three stories and forms the street facade; the second, the nucleus of the house, is formed by an atrium with the house as its center and a corridor which connects the first and third parts. The third part consists of a lower floor and its roof-terrace.

The main staircase, which connects all three floors, forms a vertical axis of organization. Reading the house on a floor by floor basis, on the lower floor of the first part is the main entrance and garage, both with direct access to the street. The servant's area, also located on this ground floor, consists of bedroom, bathroom, laundryroom, patio, and kitchen. In the second part, the connecting corridors, the atrium (a feature of great importance in Barragan's architecture as well as in the Mexican architectural tradition itself), and finally, the third part of the house contains the dining room and indoor pool (which, as will be seen, is an essential part of the house).

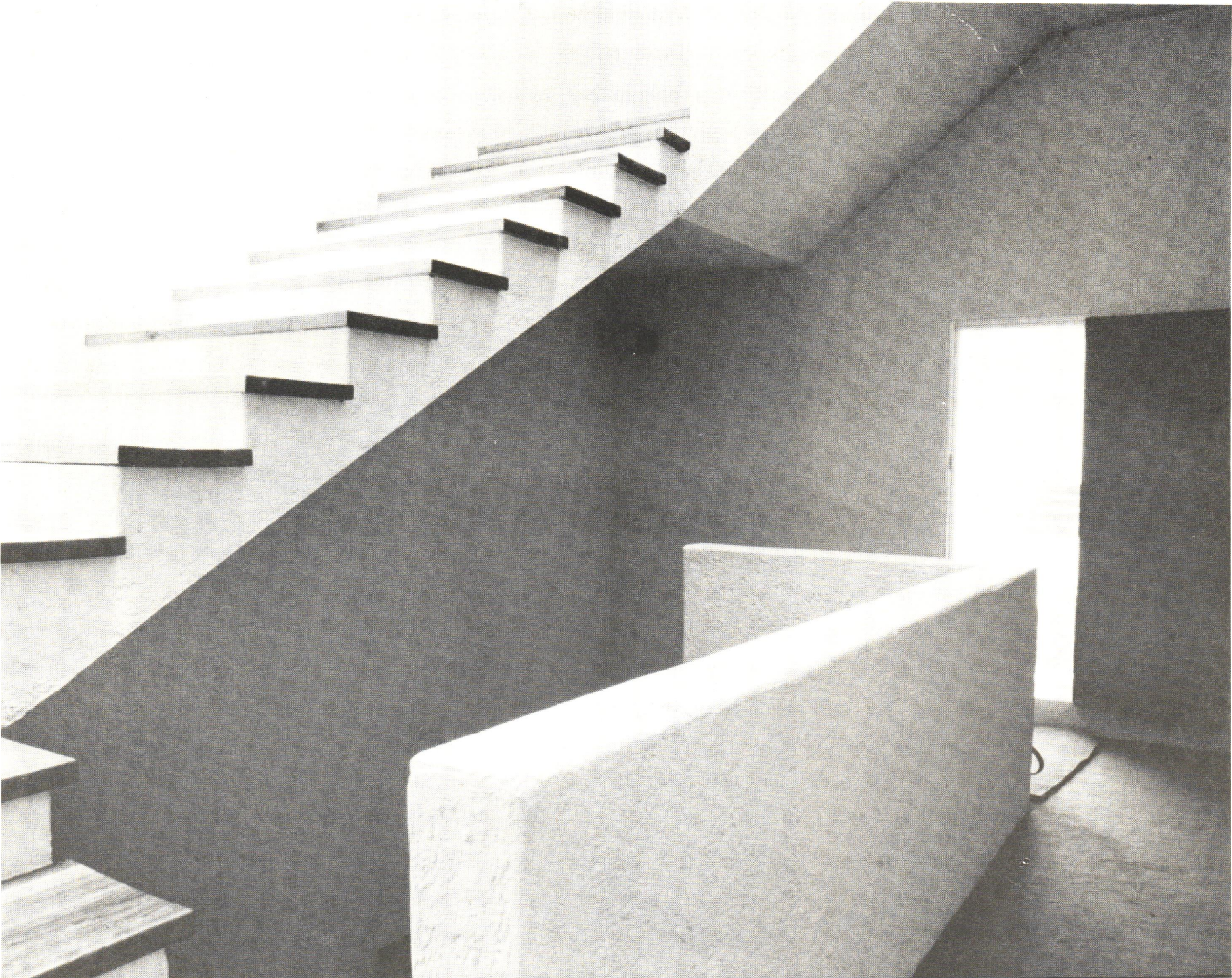
On the second floor is the living room, a bedroom and its bath both connected to a patio-terrace, and another large terrace with different levels formed by the roof of the corridor and the roof over the pool and dining room. All the interior facades can be appreciated from this terrace as well as the beautiful view of the central court with its magnificent composition of wall planes and colors.

On the third floor are situated the master-bedroom and a third bedroom both with their corresponding bathrooms. Walking through the house, it becomes

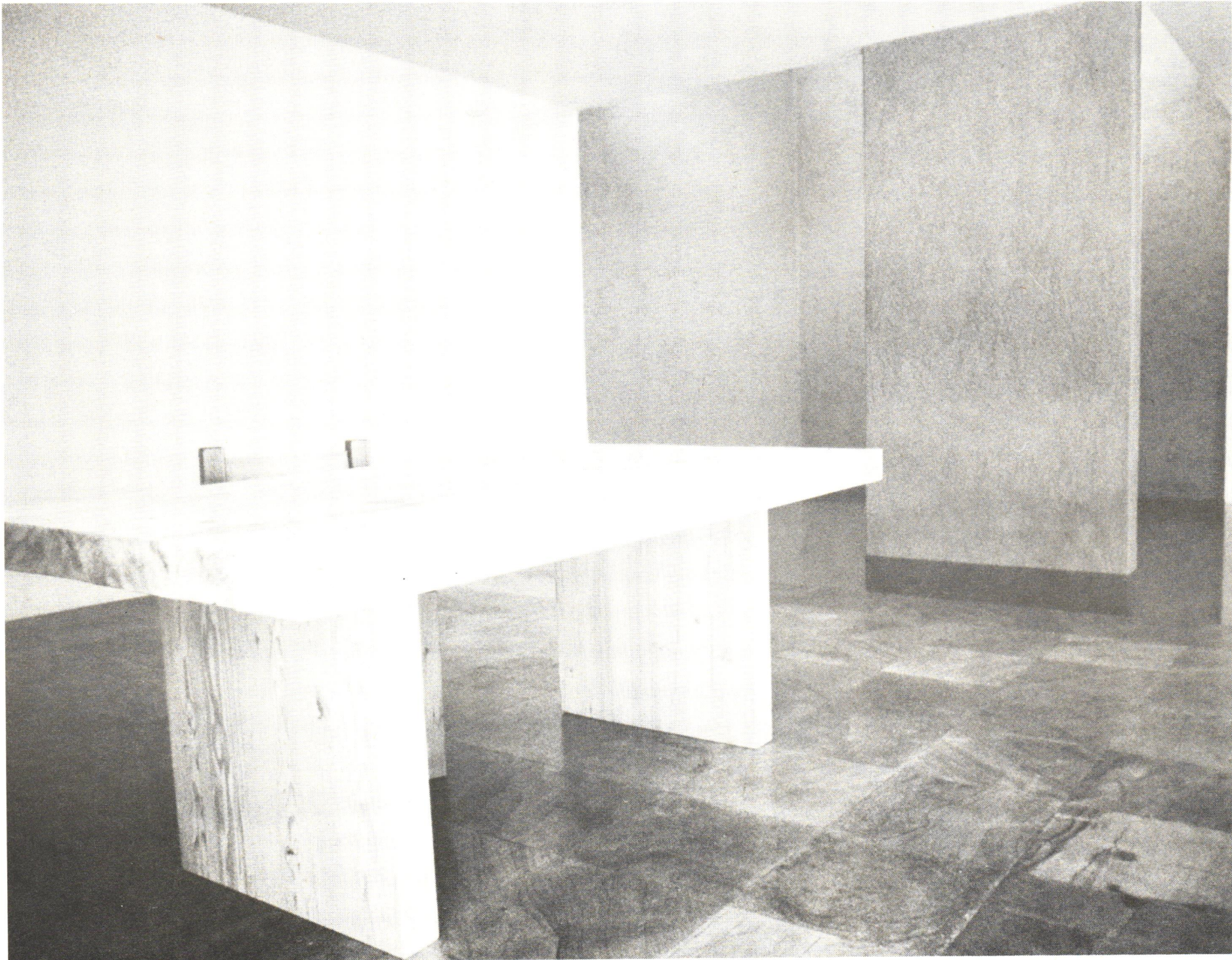


Roof terrace





Interior staircase with open 'pink' door leading to the roof terrace.



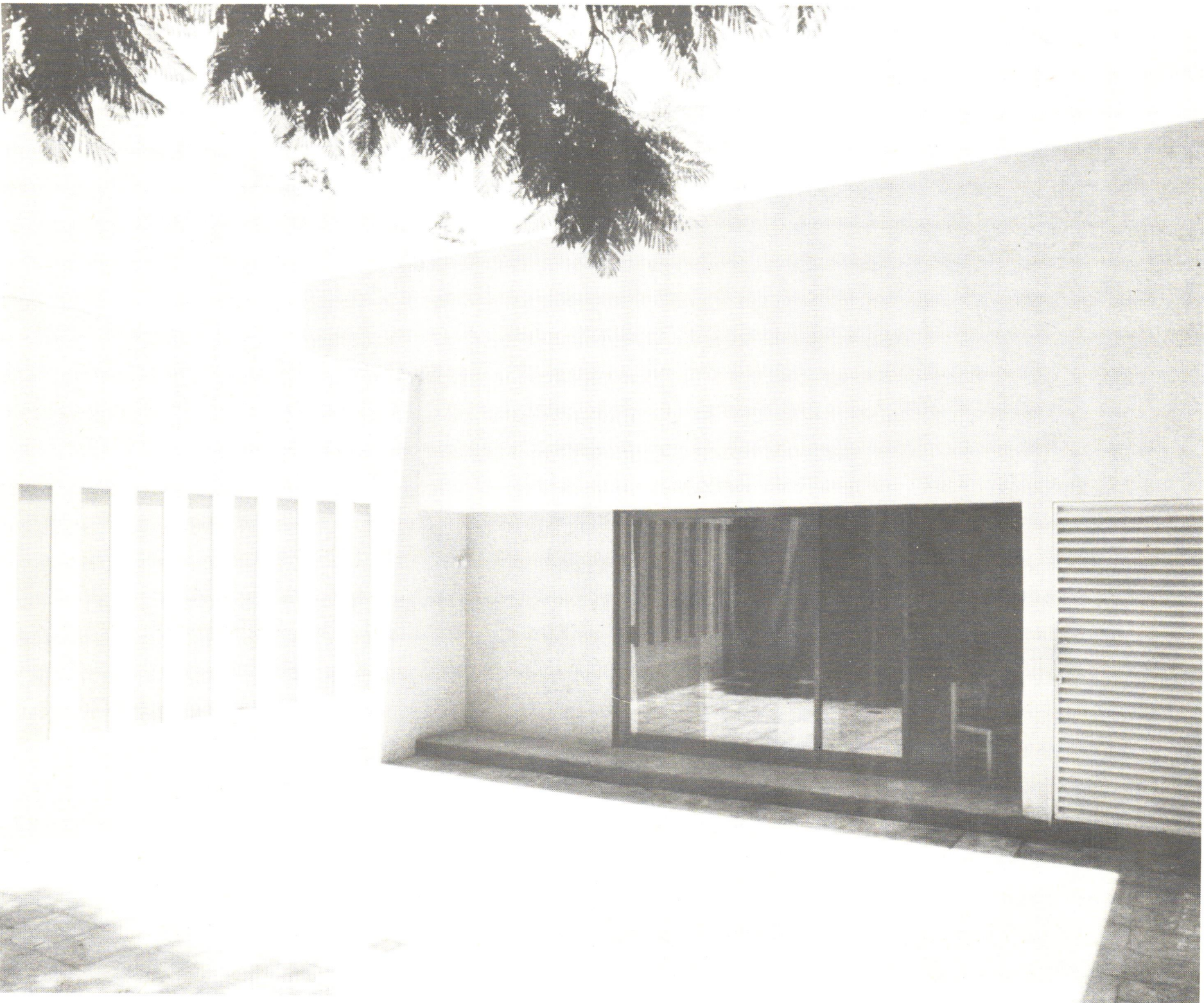
Barragan designed furniture.



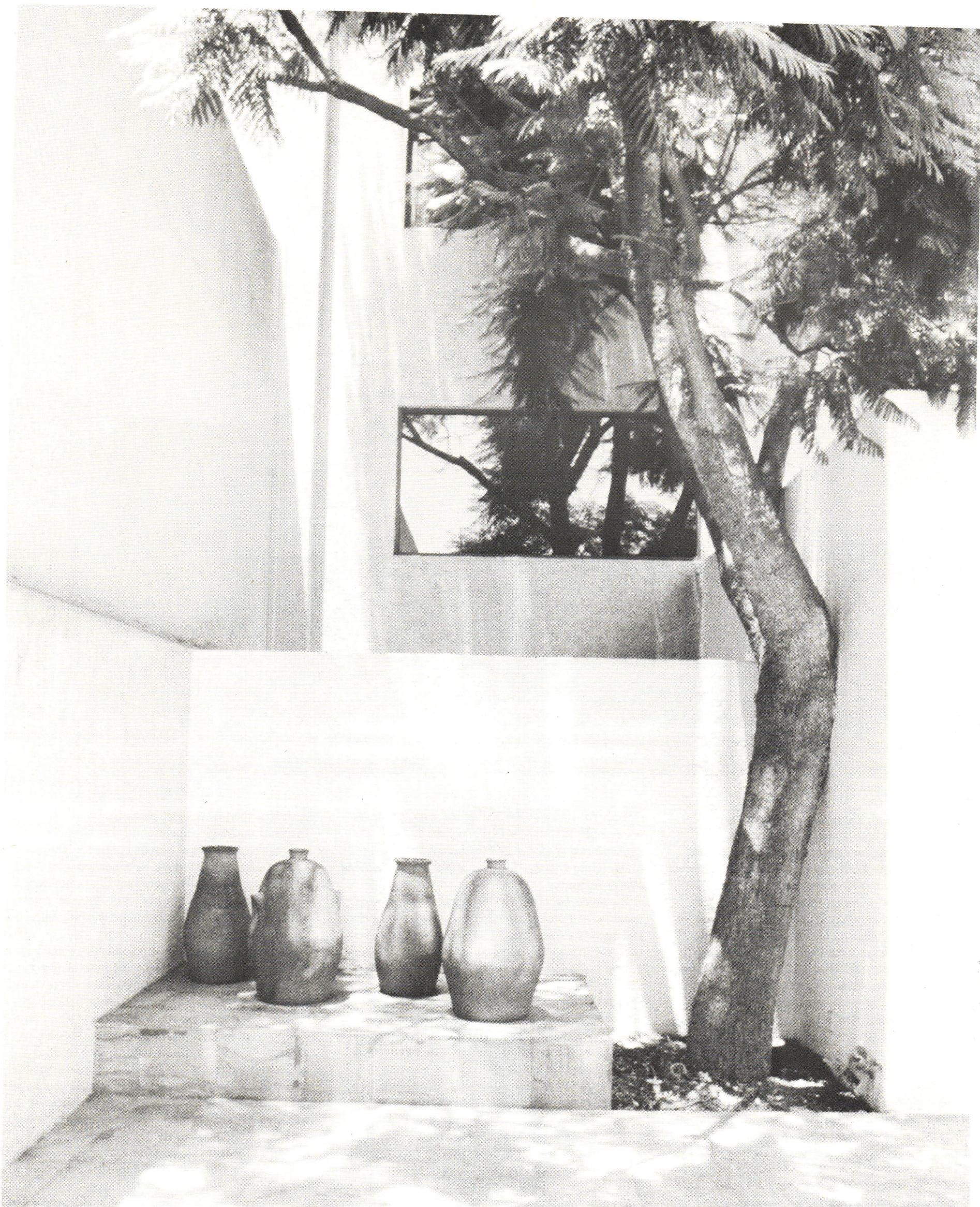
View from the corridor toward the entrance to the house showing kitchen door with square port.



Outside view of the corridor from the patio showing dining room access.







View toward the house from the patio. The tree, the metaphysical center of the house, is along with the traditional and mystical ceramics a part of the design.

evident that circulation spaces are of great importance. The main staircase, with its large skylight and the connecting corridor, forms a succession of yellow and transparent layers which lend the spaces a special, almost magical quality. Upon entering the corridor and experiencing the intense yellow light filtering in through the vertical slats (cf. cover), the image of a pool of blue light draws one forward, a journey enhanced by the fact that from the corridor one cannot break out into the courtyard. The cool destination is thus even more desirable and is fulfilled with its accompanying red counterpoint.

Barragan's Gilardi house incorporates and refines those design elements which he has evolved over the years to create his magical spaces, especially his characteristic and unconventional use of color. The exquisite utilization of color tones, varying from pink to pale violet, emphasizes the plastic character of the space. Other distinguishable elements include

the surprising arrangement of corner angles, the use of perspective, and most of all changes in scale between the different spaces as one exits from the house onto the atrium through the small and innocent-looking pink door.

The sober yet delicate patio, wrapped in a spiral of planes and levels around the tree, finally yields an understanding of the house as a development of cubes whose center is the tree.

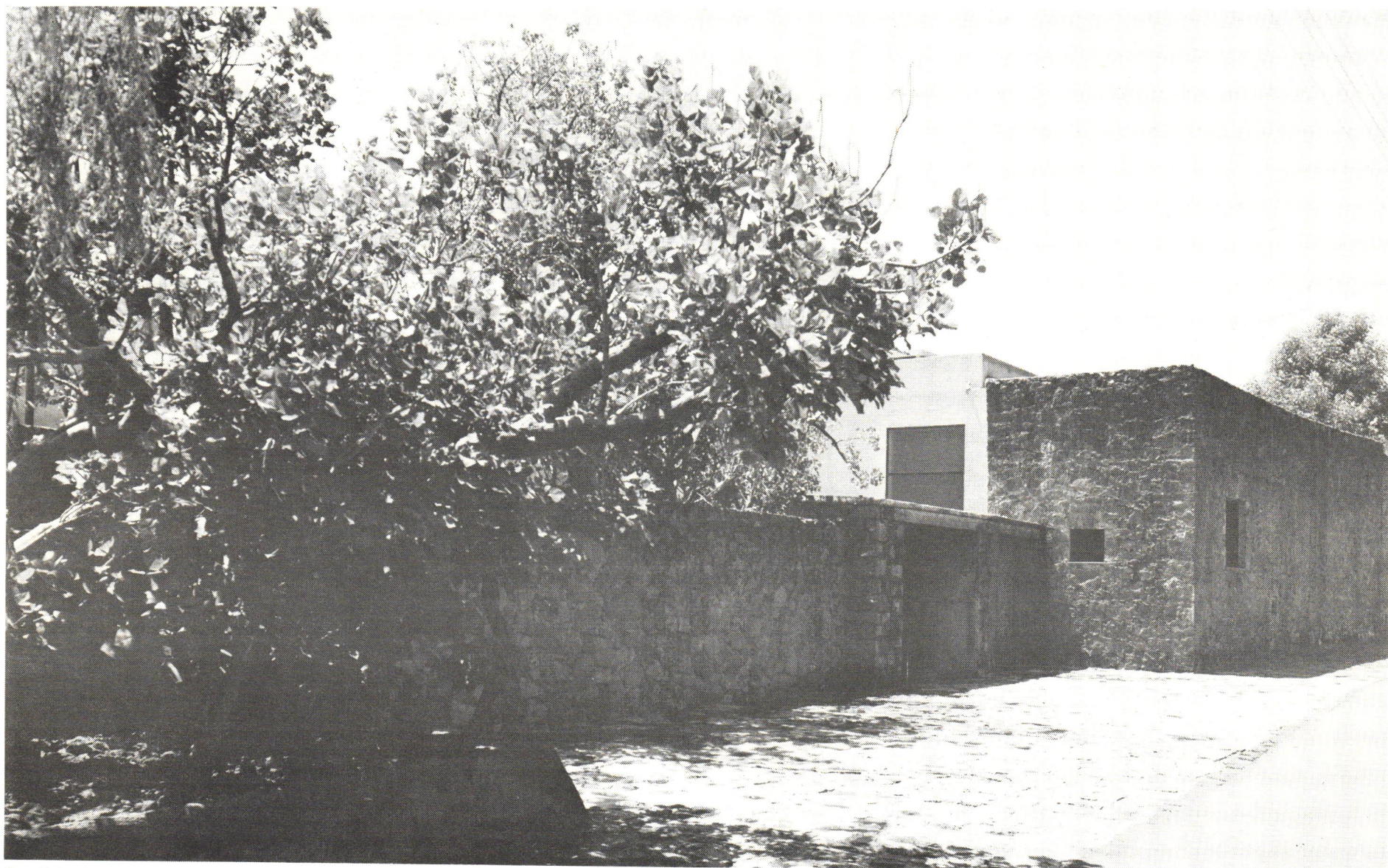
Finally, one of the most architecturally inspired and creative spaces is the indoor pool and dining room area. This is an austere, spare, and astringent space. Its polished stone floor abruptly ends at the water's edge. Planes—those of the water, the polished stone floor, and the red vertical wall in the center of the swimming pool with no apparent function—abruptly intersect. The only furnishing in the room is a simple mesquite wood table designed by Barragan with its accompanying peasant

chairs. A magical light bathes the room from the large aperture directly over the pool, focusing yellow light down the red vertical wall shaft. As a counterpoint, diagonally across from the light well, a smaller skylight directs the sun onto a small yellow wall, beside which is a bench. The subtle interplay of these formal elements creates, as its designer says, an environment of aesthetic emotions, and creates, in fact, art in architecture. ●



# Barragan on Barragan

Formal address by Luis Barragan — Dumbarton Oaks  
Tuesday, June 3, 1980



Casa Prieto Lopez, Luis Barragan, 1950

Armando Salas Portugal

A colleague of Luis Barragan was pouring over a substantial stack of drawings a few years ago. The project was Barragan's little convent in Tlapan, and this architect, who knows Barragan well, was disturbed by the seemingly terrible schemes which he saw. Idea after idea for the altar was scribbled out—sunbursts, metal sculptures, elaborate shapes—all totally inappropriate, except for the very last image which was the essence of simplicity: a rectangular platform with gilt-hinged doors at its side. This last scheme, at the bottom of the pile, the one ultimately built, had no relationship to the rest. There was no logical progression, no painstaking development or modifying of an initial idea. This story illustrates the Barragan method of design, difficult to recount and to which he alludes in our interview—intuition. It is the cornerstone of his architecture.

The other clue to his genius is illustrated in the way he transformed his own house in Tacubaya. The large estancia (literally, staying place, but generally living room) was a loft-like space approximately 30' × 60' × 20' high, with large windows at the smaller extremities. After a few years of use he began to experiment, dividing the space into smaller spaces—creating a study and sitting rooms. He used canvas screens, wooden wall partitions of lesser heights—seven, eight, and ten feet high—and colored them in a variety of shades. Only after three years of experimentation was he satisfied with the proportions and new spaces. Likewise, the house was painted in a range of different colors over the years, straying from the all white of its infancy. This revision process was like a struggle with one's memory, or Barragan's attempt to recall the spaces of his remembered youth in Mazamiitla. The recurring ideas in his work are invariably the landscape, vernacular buildings, and interiors of old Jalisco. Barragan has been understandably vague about his personal 'theory' of architecture. And certainly the books and articles about him are uninformative regarding his *modus operandi*.

This autobiographical approach seems to typify the better work in recent architecture—as that of Rossi, Krier, Hollein and Barragan. These architects who share strong hermetic visions create highly personal work which is therefore more touching to the beholder. For this, Barragan was recently recognized with the Pritzker Prize, the newly established 'Nobel Prize' of International Architecture. He is the second recipient

(Philip Johnson was the first) of the \$100,000 award presented in Washington D.C. on June 3, 1980. The jury consisted of Carter Brown, Lord Clark of Saltwood, Arata Isozaki, J. Irwin Miller, Cesar Pelli and Philip Johnson.

We think that this acceptance speech offers the most beautiful and precise exposition on and about this artist, and heralds a Barragan 'Theory,' which is most welcome and highly important.

First, I would like to convey my sincere gratitude to the Board of Directors of the Hyatt Foundation; to the members of the Pritzker family; to the distinguished jurors; to Carleton Smith, Secretary of the Jury, and to every one who endorsed my nomination for this most distinguished award.

I welcome the opportunity to express my admiration for the United States of America, generous patron of the arts and sciences, which—as in so many instances—has transcended its geographical frontiers and purely national interests to confer this high distinction on a son of Mexico, thus recognizing the universality of cultural values and, in particular, those of my native country.

But as no one ever owes all to his own individual effort, it would be ungrateful not to remember on this evening all those who throughout my lifetime have contributed to my work with their talents, assistance and encouragement: fellow architects, designers, photographers, writers, journalists, as well as personal friends who have honored me by taking an active interest in my work.

Following Mr. Smith's suggestion, I take this occasion to present some impressions and recollections that, to some extent, sum up the ideology behind my work. In this regard, Mr. Jay Pritzker stated in an announcement to the press — with excessive generosity — what I consider essential to that ideology:

that I had been chosen as the recipient of this prize for having devoted myself to architecture "as a sublime act of poetic imagination." Consequently, I am only a symbol for all those who have been touched by the Angel of Beauty.

To my dismay, I have found that an alarming proportion of publications devoted to architecture

have banished from their pages the words Beauty, Inspiration, Magic, Spellbound, Enchantment, as well as the concepts of Serenity, Silence, Intimacy and Amazement. All these have nestled in my soul, and though I am fully aware that I have not done them complete justice in my work, they have never ceased to be my guiding lights, as expanded upon in the following themes.

**Religion and Myth.** It is impossible to understand Art and the glory of its history without avowing religious spirituality and its mythical roots that lead us to the very reason of being of the artistic phenomenon. Without the one or the other there would be no Egyptian pyramids nor those of ancient Mexico. Would the Greek temples and Gothic cathedrals have existed? Would the amazing marvels of the Renaissance and the Baroque have come about? And in another field, would the ritual dances of the so-called primitive cultures have developed? Would we now be the heirs of the inexhaustible artistic treasure of worldwide popular sensitivity? Without the desire for God, our planet would be a sorry wasteland of ugliness.

"The irrational logic harboured in the myths and in all true religious experiences has been the fountainhead of the artistic process at all times and in all places."

These are words of my good friend, Edmundo O'Gorman, and, with or without his permission, I have made them mine.

**Beauty.** The invincible difficulty that the philosophers have in defining the meaning of this word is unequivocal proof of its ineffable mystery. Beauty speaks like an oracle, and ever since man has heeded its message in an infinite number of ways: it may be in the use of tattoos, in the choice of a seashell necklace by which the bride enhances the promise of her surrender, or, again, in the apparently superfluous ornamentation of everyday tools and domestic utensils, not to speak of temples and palaces and even, in our day, in the industrialized products of modern technology. Human life deprived of beauty is not worthy of being called so.

**Silence.** In the gardens and homes designed by me I have always endeavored to allow for the interior placid murmur of silence, and in my fountains, silence sings.





Interior, Casa Prieto Lopez, Luis Barragan, 1950

**Solitude.** Only in intimate communion with solitude may man find himself. Solitude is good company and my architecture is not for those who fear or shun it.

**Serenity.** Serenity is the great and true antidote against anguish and fear, and today, more than ever, it is the architect's duty to make of it a permanent guest in the home, no matter how sumptuous or how humble. Throughout my work I have always strived to achieve serenity, but one must be on guard not to destroy it by the use of an indiscriminate palette.

**Joy.** How can one forget joy? I believe that a work of art reaches perfection when it conveys silent joy and serenity.

**Death.** The certainty of death is the spring of action and therefore of life, and in the implicit religious element in the work of art, life triumphs over death.

**Gardens.** In the creation of a garden, the architect invites the partnership of the Kingdom of Nature. In a beautiful garden, the majesty of Nature is ever present, but Nature reduced to human proportions and thus transformed into the most efficient haven against the aggressiveness of contemporary life.

Ferdinand Bac taught us that "the soul of gardens shelters the greatest sum of serenity at man's disposal," and it is to him that I am indebted for my longing to create a perfect garden. He said, speaking of his gardens at les Colombiers, "in this small domain, I have done nothing else but joined the millenary solidarity to which we are all subject: the ambition of expressing materially a sentiment, common to many men in search of a link with nature by creating a place of repose of peaceable pleasure."

It will appear obvious, then, that a garden must combine the poetic and the mysterious with a feeling of serenity and joy. There is no fuller expression of vulgarity than a vulgar garden.

To the south of Mexico City lies a vast extension of volcanic rock, and, overwhelmed by the beauty of this landscape, I decided to create a series of gardens to humanize, without destroying, its magic. While walking along the lava crevices, under the shadow of imposing ramparts of live rock, I suddenly

discovered to my astonishment, small secret green valleys — the shepherds call them "jewels" — surrounded and enclosed by the most fantastic, capricious rock formations wrought on as yet soft, melted rock by the onslaught of powerful prehistoric winds. The unexpected discovery of these "jewels" gave me a sensation similar to the one experienced when, having walked through a dark and narrow tunnel of the alhambra, I suddenly emerged into the serene, silent and solitary "Patio of the Myrtles" hidden in the entrails of that ancient palace. Somehow I had the feeling that it enclosed what a perfect garden — no matter its size — should enclose: nothing less than the entire Universe.

This memorable epiphany has always been with me, and it is not by mere chance that from the first garden of which I am responsible all those following are attempts to capture the echo of the immense lesson to be derived from the aesthetic wisdom of the Spanish Moors.

**Fountains.** A fountain brings us peace, joy and restful sensuality and reaches the epitomy of its very essence when by its power to bewitch it will stir dreams of distant worlds.

While awake or when sleeping, the sweet memories of marvelous fountains have accompanied me throughout my life. I recall the fountains of my childhood; the drains for excess water of the dam; the dark ponds in the recess of abandoned orchards; the curbstone of shallow wells in the convent patios; the small country springs, quivering mirrors of ancient giant water-loving trees, and then, of course, the old aqueducts—perennial reminders of Imperial Rome — which from lost horizons hurry their liquid treasure to deliver it with the rainbow ribbons of a waterfall.

**Architecture.** My architecture is autobiographical, as Emilio Ambasz pointed out in his book on my work published by the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Underlying all that I have achieved — such as it is — are the memories of my father's ranch where I spent my childhood and adolescence. In my work I have always strived to adapt to the needs of modern living the magic of those remote nostalgic years.

The lessons to be learned from the unassuming architecture of the village and provincial towns of

my country have been a permanent source of inspiration. Such, for instance, the whitewashed walls; the peace to be found in patios and orchards; the colorful streets; the humble majesty of the village squares surrounded by shady open corridors. And as there is a deep historical link between these teachings and those of the North African and Moroccan Villages, they too have enriched my perception of beauty in architectural simplicity.

Being a Catholic, I have frequently visited with reverence the now empty monumental monastic buildings that we inherited from the powerful religious faith and architectural genius of our colonial ancestors, and I have always been deeply moved by the peace and well-being to be experienced when visited those uninhabited cloisters and solitary courts. How I have wished that these feelings may leave their mark in my work.

**The Art of Seeing.** It is essential to an architect to know how to see: I mean to see in such a way that the vision is not overpowered by rational analysis. And in this respect I will take advantage of this opportunity to pay homage to a very dear friend who, through his infallible aesthetic taste, taught us the difficult art of seeing with innocence. I refer to the Mexican painter Jesus (Chucho) Reyes Ferreira for whose wise teachings I publicly acknowledge my indebtedness.

And it may not be out of place to quote another great friend of mine and of the Arts, the poet Carlos Pellicer:

Through sight the good and the bad  
we do perceive  
Unseeing eyes  
Souls deprived of hope.

**Nostalgia.** Nostalgia is the poetic awareness of our personal past, and since the artist's own past is the mainspring of his creative potential, the architect must listen and heed his nostalgic revelations.

My associate and friend, the young architect Raul Ferrera, as well as our small staff, share with me the ideology which I have tried to present. We have worked and hope to continue to work inspired by the faith that the aesthetic truth of those ideas will in some measure contribute toward dignifying human existence by promoting beauty in the service of graceful living. ●



# William Wilson Wurster

*A Northern California Modernist Architect*

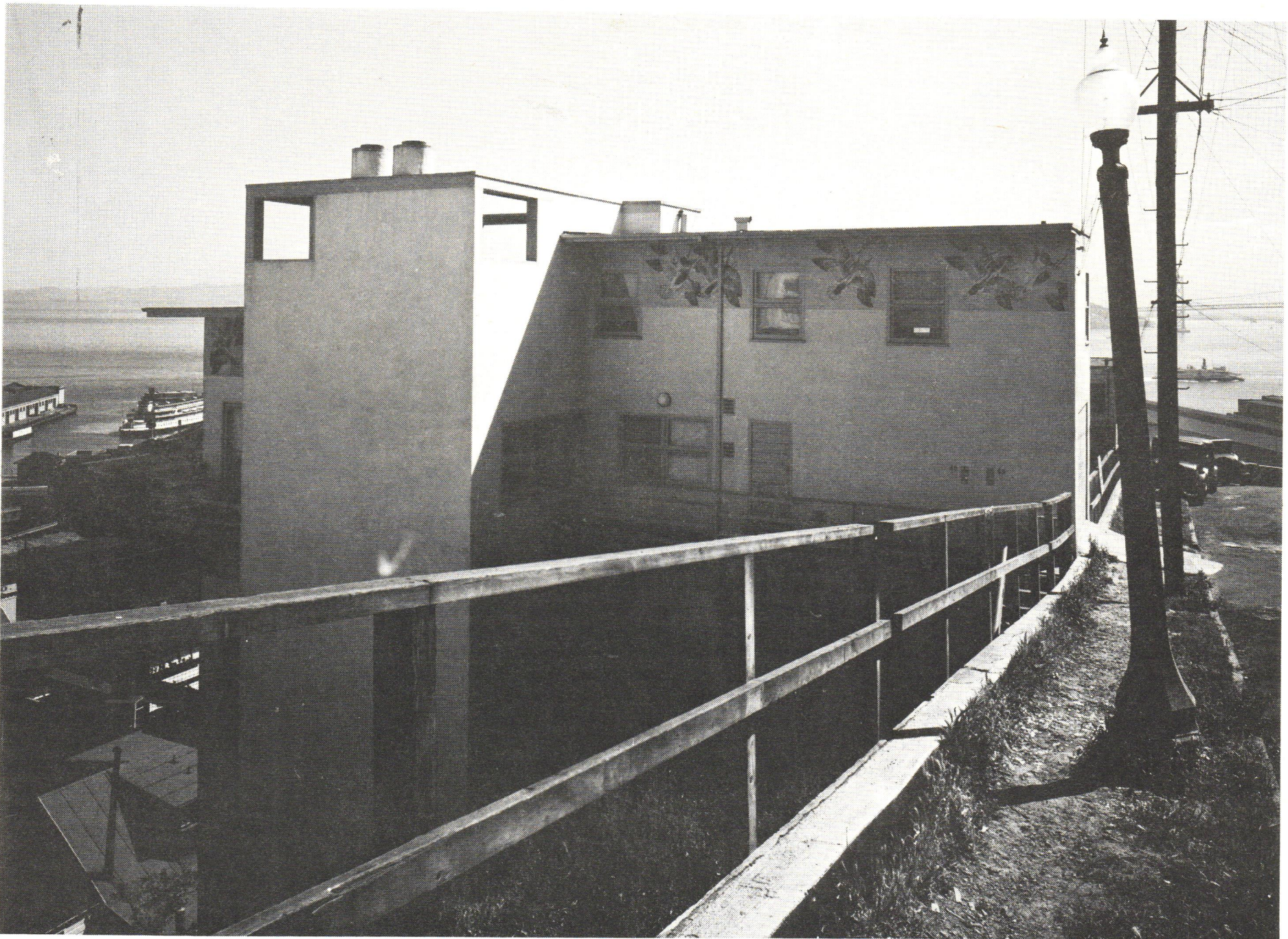
The equivocal quality of William Wurster's work has confused as well as attracted many to his architectural following. For, while his career was a long development of personal architectural images, these were coupled with more fleeting ideas of architectural fashion and rhetoric from the mid-1920s through the early '70s. The study of these contrasting influences, although organized differently in each work, allows an understanding of Wurster's work.

Three examples of Wurster's work from the latter part of his practice's early period (1926-1944),<sup>1</sup> the Helen Forbes and the Dearborn Clark houses of 1937, and Stern Hall Dormitory, U.C. Berkeley 1938-1942 will be discussed here. These buildings are distillations of formal ideas from his earliest work.



Contextual view of the Forbes House on Telegraph Hill seen from the northwest.





Vertical shaft and duck fresco seen from the west.

## Helen Forbes House, An Urban Work 1937

Situated on the northeast slope of Telegraph Hill in San Francisco, this house is organized as a stack of three flats on a downhill site with a garage at the upper street level—the building form derives from the stacking of vertical units as well as positioning rooms for important views and sunlight.

The window and door placement typically was determined by pragmatic living considerations rather than by a concern for architectural precedent. Although this rationalization allowed Wurster to present his work as ‘modernist,’ as we shall see archetypal images and shapes are found in the work as well.

The building turns its back to the street on the south. The north is read as a tower with its stack of windows towards the Bay which produced a scale distortion because of the high-ceilinged three living rooms one above another. On the west the full impact of the carefully composed planar composition is fully revealed. The stairs and decks strengthen the vertical shaft-like form by means of contrast. From the west this prominent shaft, now largely obscured, with its cylindrical chimney stacks is like a modernist ‘tower’ with roofs dependently stacked up for ‘architectural support’ from the strength of this vertical element.

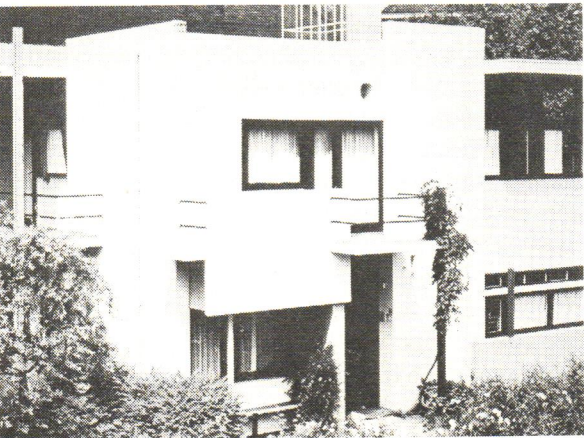
The 1924 Schroder House in Utrecht, Holland and Rietveld’s other work helped to clarify a planar European modern aesthetic which Wurster’s office<sup>2</sup> adopted in the Forbes House. This ‘flat wall’

aesthetic drew its meaning from a picturesque arrangement of planar cardboard-like elements with ‘glued’ connections penetrated by unframed ‘openings’ for doors and windows. In pure examples this aesthetic produced buildings much like enlarged constructivist sculpture. By the mid-thirties, this idea of designing buildings as enlarged sculptures was firmly established within the architectural profession. As a result, many architects made every effort to remove traditional building-like appurtenances so that the sculptural aspect became dominant. As in much European modernist work, the functionalist logic utilized the roof as an important outdoor living space. The ground at building bases was neither overly urbanized or planned for more symbolic and passive use. As a result, here in the Forbes House we see the roof as partial living space as well as an important compositional device. As one considers the traditional roof deck forms in San Francisco, one sees in this Wurster house very little reliance upon the San Francisco formal precedents and instead, a direct precedent is seen in a Mallet Steven’s roof garden in France. One also examines, in the surrounding neighborhood of nineteenth century buildings, rear facades with definite scale variations in window size and placement and accentuated vertical proportions precisely as in the Forbes House. Further, contextual parallels could be drawn in stairway positioning on the elevation, in fact the rail and newel post were specifically borrowed from a Monterey Colonial prototype.<sup>3</sup>

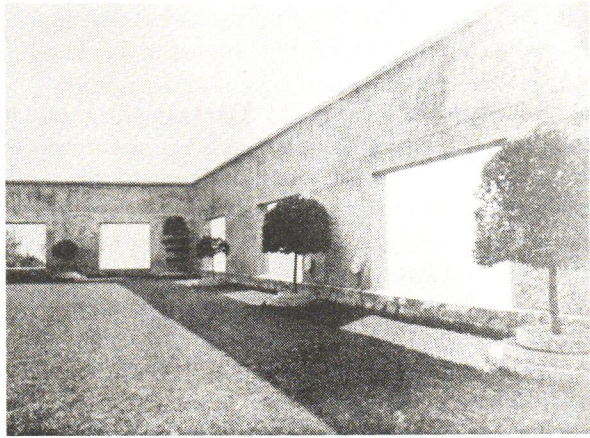
As a result, we see the simultaneous blending of ‘mixed metaphor’—the high art forms of Europe

with the ‘down home’ urban forms translated into a mixture of meaning—such that both used together create architectural tension. This duality both set Wurster apart from his traditionalist peers and his contextualism alienated him from his emerging younger and more committed modernist peer group.

The painted duck frescoes by Helen Forbes<sup>4</sup> (which give it the name of the ‘duck’ house) are still prominent on the elevation, on the protective shadowlines of the overhanging roofs. The migrating mallards are a familiar theme in middle-class American imagery and this sophisticated rendering elevates this icon, glorifying a commonplace symbol of freedom and ritualistic change of season into a ‘high art’ product.



Schroder House, Utrecht, Holland 1924.



Roofgarden by Mallet-Stevens. Pre 1937.



Vertical shaft.





Side view showing dining terrace and living room balcony of Stern Hall. West elevation.



Dormitory wing showing diverse window treatment on south elevation and square window grid on southeast corner. Entry to the far right.



View from west. Dining hall and living room on left dormitory wing on right showing. Building follows the site contour. The two dormitory wings are perpendicular to building.

### Stern Hall: A Suburban Example

As a second example of the particular mixture of images in Wurster's work let us examine one of the most important buildings ever done in the Wurster office,<sup>5</sup> Stern Hall, a women's dormitory on the U.C. Berkeley campus. Built in 1940-42,<sup>6</sup> this multi-story concrete structure stands as an example of the mixing of particular local residential building type developed in San Francisco and European modern movement styling and details known to San Franciscans through publications, if not through direct observation. Program requirements were that of an enlarged multi-bedroom 'house.' Endowed and as a result designed to provide a suitably gracious place for women students, it was done nonetheless in an efficient manner suited to the needs of modern student life in 1940. There still remains in the building a gentility and modest charm.

This modernist building is composed of horizontal slabs each positioned into 'bent' units on the ground which was intended to maximize what was then a more open view across to the Golden Gate Bridge and to San Francisco. Nonetheless, the roof overhang 'cap' weakens its sculptural stance and re-establishes the traditional meaning of a hat-framing-face configuration that Wurster seemed to like in all buildings and demanded of most of his own work. The building elevations, rather than being diagrammatic or a simple expression of one set of ideas are more aesthetically flexible; they are thematically correct and expressively potent. This flexibility, for example, occurs on the east facade with the mixing of the 1930s Italian style modernist four-story window grid with the nineteenth century double-hung type on the service wing. The south wall of one dormitory wing also has a mixture of square double-hung and awning window types and sizes. These window types are supplemented by a

modernist-glazed window wall at the dormitory stairs and french door exits at the social hall, deck and terrace.

So, while the mixture of sizes was accommodated with vigor as required on the building elevations, these variations were a result of functional differences—differing light requirements and the architectural need to present on the exterior certain interior functional elements such as stairways. This stairway device, a common modernist architectural practice, although condoned, had certain double meanings which now allow a new interpretive thrust to this practice of revealing the building 'function' by glazing the stairwell. It created a functional voyeurism. The other net effect was to project the decorative effect of the stair onto the elevation where one was not 'allowed' to decorate in the pre-modern sense. That was something only bad architects did, or ones who never understood the *real meaning* of modernism. In Stern Hall, the windows,

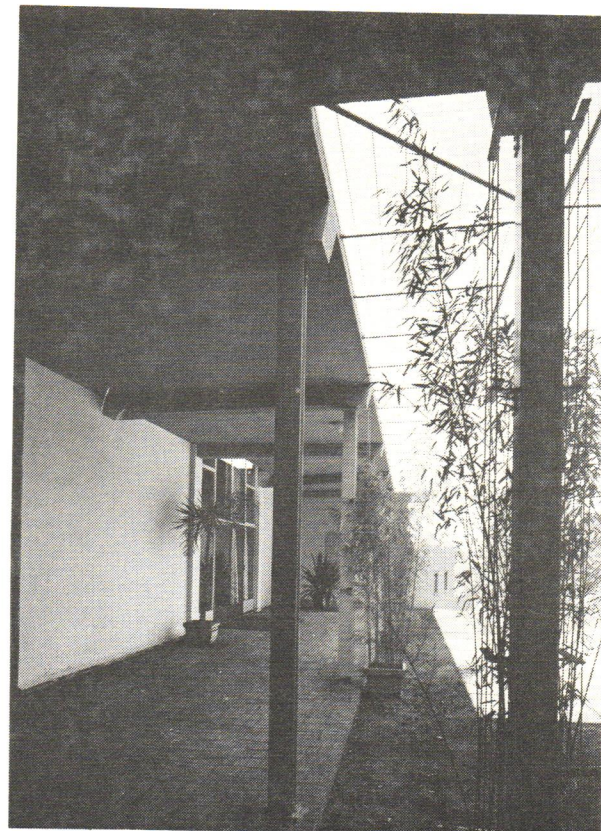




Split-level concrete dormitory stair with flat bar railing.



Salvisburg inspired circular stairway in lower entry hall.



Dining terrace with wire and steel pergola.

because they do reflect functional variations, are thematically correct as they should be in the functionalist aesthetic. Because they were also placed by a skilled and sophisticated eye their expressive power on the elevation is clear—they became diagrams of the 'story' behind the facade wall.

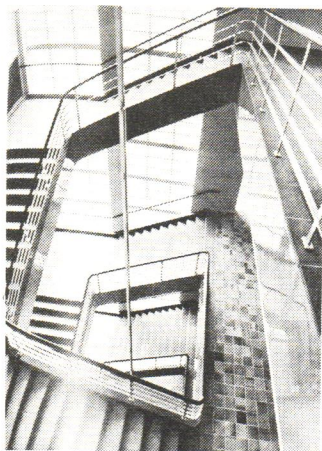
Another example of aesthetic flexibility occurs structurally at the porch overhang outside the living room. Here, the french door and window assembly is enlarged in scale, beyond the limits of both porch roof and structural bay. Seizing upon this as an opportunity for architectural expression—rather than simply creating a transom window interrupted by the roof slab—the architect pulled the roof slab back allowing the mullionless window to pass by unhindered. In addition, the window rather than being simply integrated within the structural bay of the porch, which most International Style modernist architects would have done, is distinct: the posts and beams are splayed, pulled apart, to allow room for this exaggeratedly scaled window opening. So the influence of the pre-modern, Bernard Maybeck<sup>8</sup> with his various scale juxtapositions and structural perversities was here and in other Wurster works to be carried on as a self-conscious adoption of sets of specific architectural attitudes about shaping buildings from within the Bay Area community itself.

The approach to the building is from a parking area towards the 'back' side of the building. Jutting out to meet the guest is a concrete-roofed entry porch perpendicular to the building. The porch as an archetypal form is a recurring interior as well as exterior device. Its application here is all the more interesting because the 'building wall' of the porch is brought forward. Openings perforate this wall on the south side of the entry porch, as windows otherwise might; but here the openings drop sunlight or daylight down on the entry walk while directing one's entering views forward to the large glazed opening, the visual penetration into the building and to the entry court side where the space is framed by citrus and sycamore trees.

Continuing into the building, the functional distribution becomes clear, it is a variation on a standard residential hillside plan: central entry and stair hall, powder room off to the back, living room, terrace and deck at this view level while below are the dining room and kitchen. The bedroom 'wings' are off to the side with their own staircase to allow the use of the visually freestanding circular main stair for more ceremonial and public passage. The well known interior designer Frances Elkins designed parts of the interior and some of her furniture still remains in the building.

The living room is large scaled, as would be expected for a gathering room of this type for a large women's dormitory. Space articulation was achieved through the lowered roof at the west wall which helps shade the room from the strong afternoon sun as well as to scale down the 10 feet into more intimate furniture groupings under this ceiling. Both east and west walls have doors to out-door spaces, the west a balcony over the diningroom, with now barely a view to the Bay, the east doors lead to a bricked entry court.

Institutional cabinet work at the entry hall is handled with what was to become the standard Wurster experimental use of products from the newly emerged plywood industry and their resulting no-nonsense detailing. One passes downstairs to the dining room on the sweeping concrete stair which while visually free floating is actually discreetly attached at midspan to the wall.



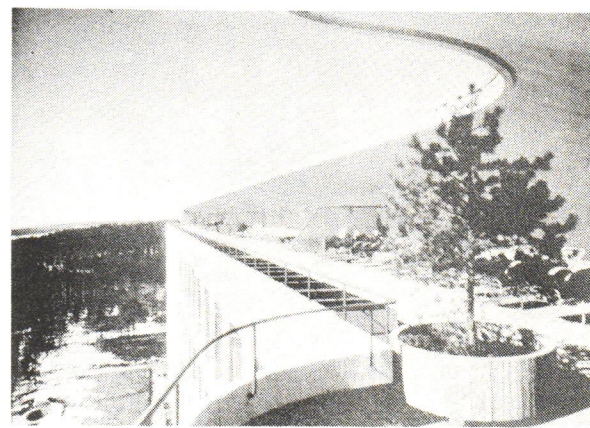
O.R. Salvisburg, Switzerland Hochschule in Zurich, *Moderne Bauformen* published 1936.

This circular stair was a direct response to contemporary European work, specifically a tribute to O.R. Salvisburg, a Swiss architect who has been published extensively in *Moderne Bauformen* and had a series of particularly beautiful stairs presented as a group in this magazine. Off the lower stair hall are the dining room and kitchen beyond, and to the south a small game room and the split level stair to the dormitory rooms beyond. At this level the building is buried into the hill along the east side, while to the west Isabelle Worn, the landscape consultant, created a narrow lawn panel spotted with a grid of sycamores establishing a semi-formal landscape lawn panel at the top of the slope which eventually drops down to a major cross-campus road. The dormitory wing is connected with a split level stair to a single-loaded corridor with two double-loaded dormitory wings. Soil conditions and views determined these locations. Each floor wing has a balcony for sunning and enjoying the dramatic view. Concepts for structuring this portion of the building largely derive from standard ideas of efficiency and practicality in this period of the International Style.

Had the spaces been designed in a more expressive way, perhaps this building might be more spatially dramatic, however, the sophistication and grace of the building's spaces are well conceived and appropriate for their use. This demonstrates an essential quality which leads to a volumetric understanding of Wurster buildings. Wurster developed a sensitivity to the balanced architectural tension between the dimensions and proportions of interior spaces by using a few space types repeatedly. Rarely, if ever, were they 'experimental' as became expected with the better known modernists. They retained essential proportions that retained cultural and social allusions to archetypal spaces in the California regional buildings he knew and loved. This allowed a close 'fit' for the clients who knew, therefore, how

to 'use' these spaces because of shared experience. Yet, this 'reactionary' viewpoint did not inhibit Wurster (or his office) from pushing and pulling these dimensions to infinite variability in proportion, as well as variations with opening and wall surface materials. As a result, Stern Hall was a kind of ultimate refinement of spaces shaped in the earlier 12 years of practice.

Structuralist details of concrete, wood-like, beams speak of the architect's recent translation from residential wood framing. Metal trellises and wire railings enliven, lighten and contrast with the monolithic concrete building mass. The metal work seems more directly functionalist than purely visual (such as at Aalto's Paimo sanitarium), and has more of the character of pre-modern California trellis work. The steel and wire have an experimental aspect; the mixture of steel shapes and the variety of use for structure, railing, and trellis had not become codified at this time into a standard set of details, the way the pipe rail has become today in International Style Revival buildings.

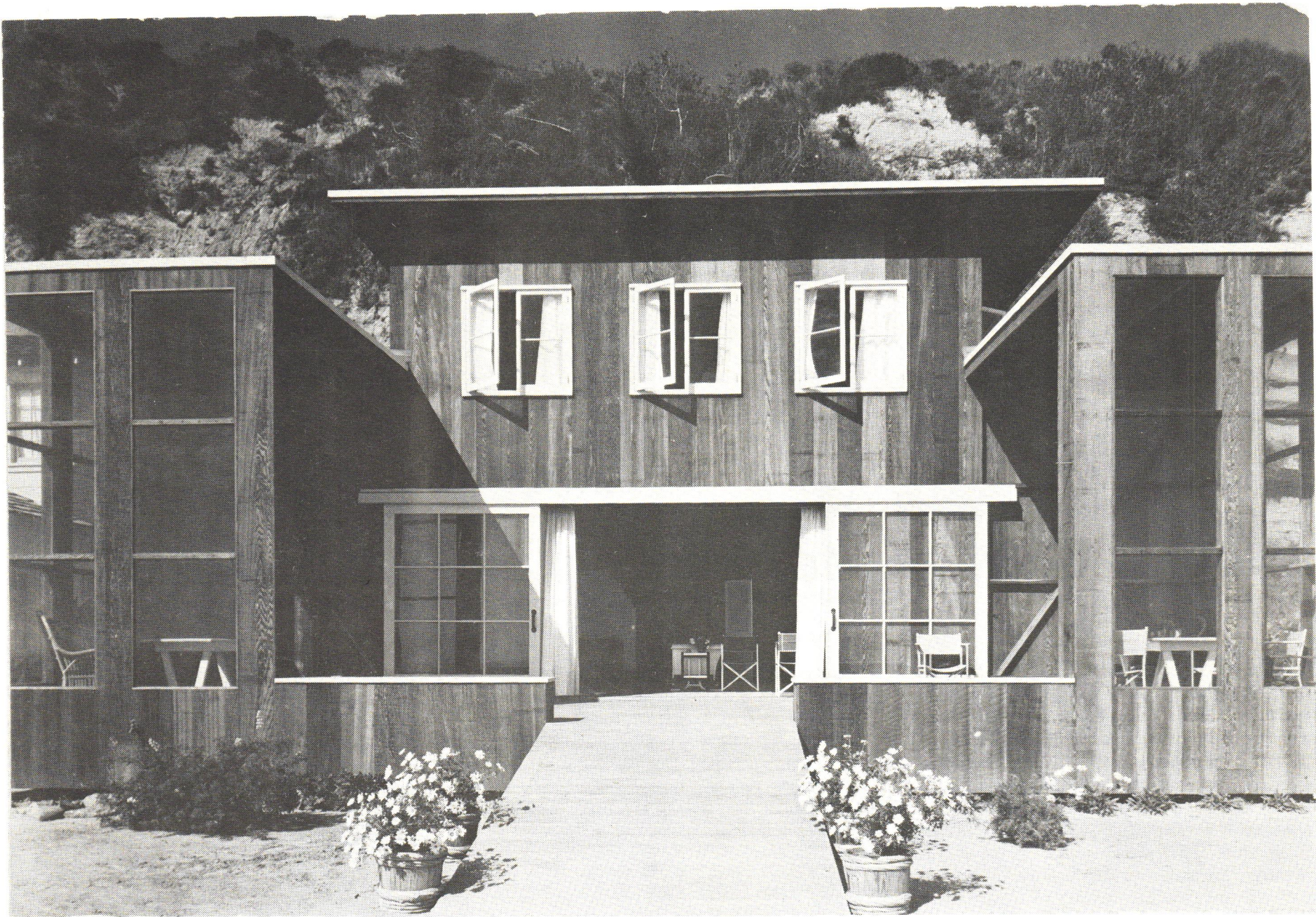


Alvar Aalto, Finland Paimo Sanatorium, 1929.

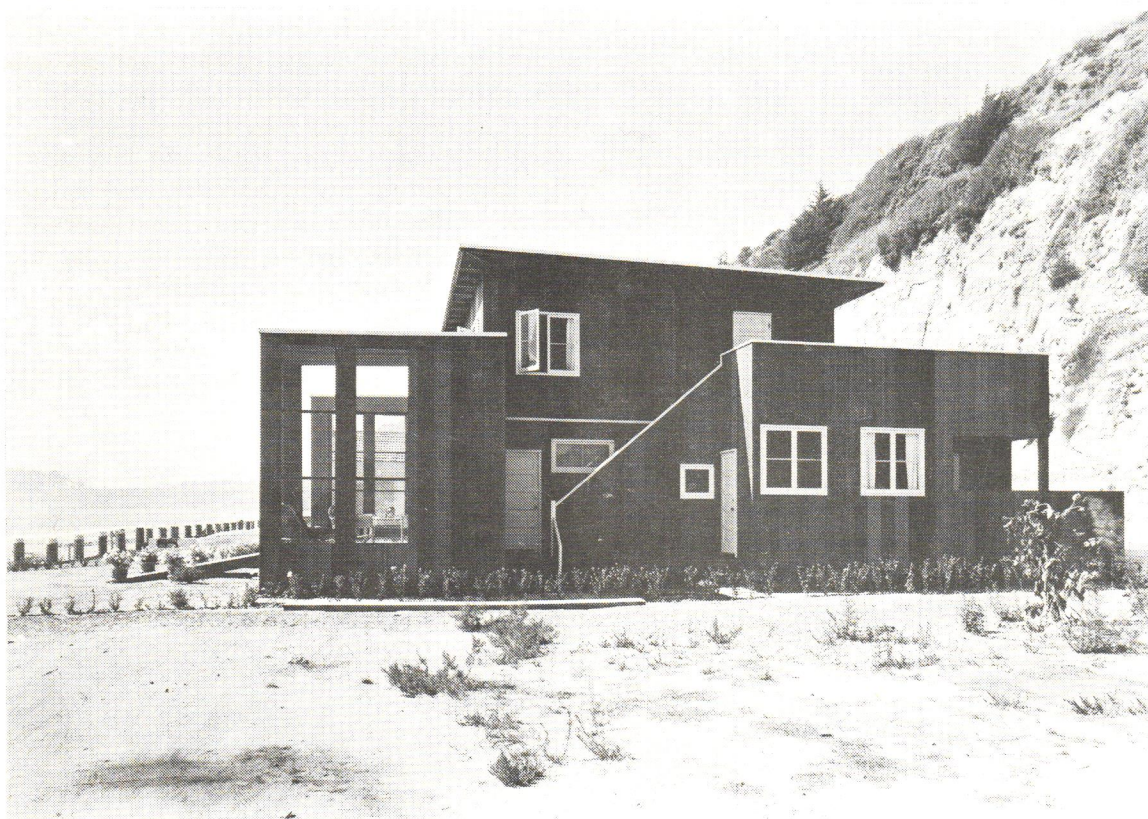
Building colors, although now faded, streaked and bleached in places, range from a rust, ochre for body colors, red window trim, to blue accent walls at dormitory ends. This strong color scheme is more closely allied with the Maybeck school than with that straight primary color scheme favored consistently by the International Style architects. The strong color completes the architectural consistency and thoroughness of design intent and is this building's strength. It has helped prolong its endurance to climate and cultural weathering as well.

The pervading idea within the local architectural community is that in 1938 Bay Area architecture only began to assert itself as an important new force in commercial and institutional buildings. Already mentioned, a full 12 years gestation period of Modern style in Wurster work had occurred in residential building. There was no gradual 'improvement' from residential to institutional work. The designers of Stern Hall within the Wurster office were mature and demonstrated in this building that a sophisticated expression of Modern architecture could be done, one which is important because of the rich weaving of a Central European aesthetic into a weft of rational planning ideas distilled from an elegant residential building tradition.

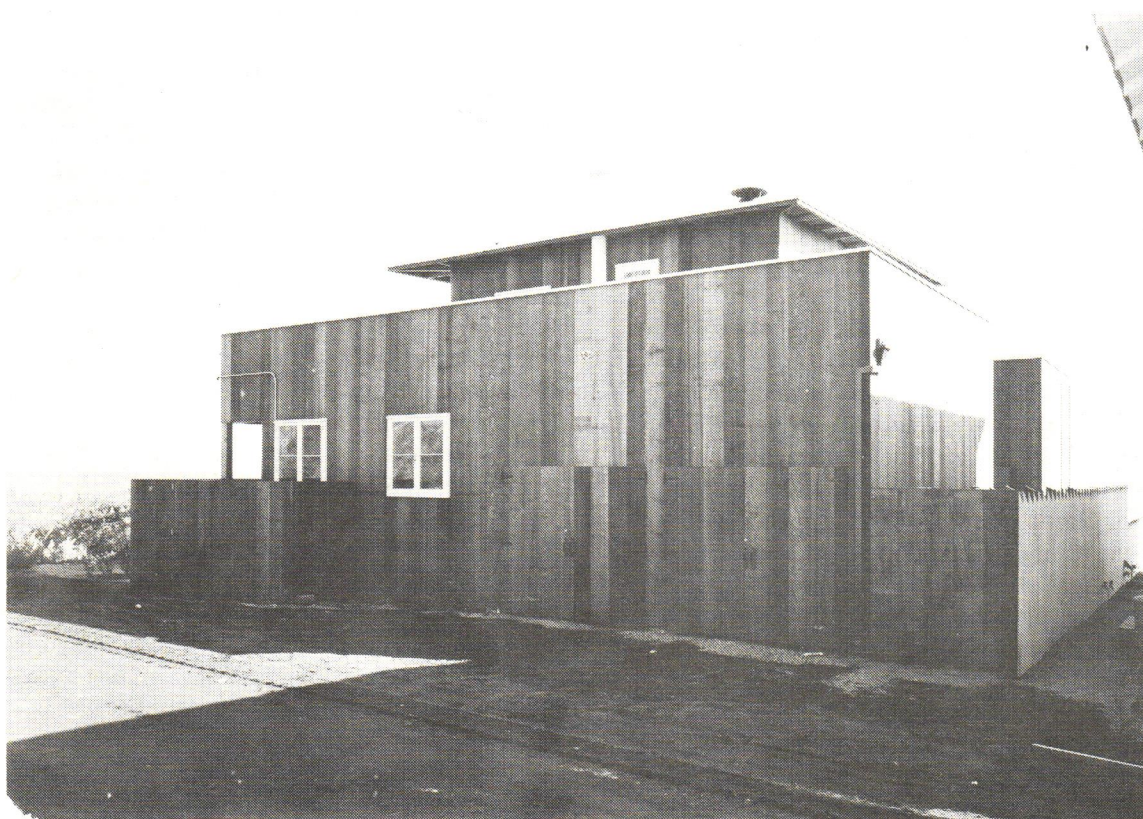




Ocean elevation showing formality and large scale windscreens. Sliding glass doors on barn door tracks shown open.

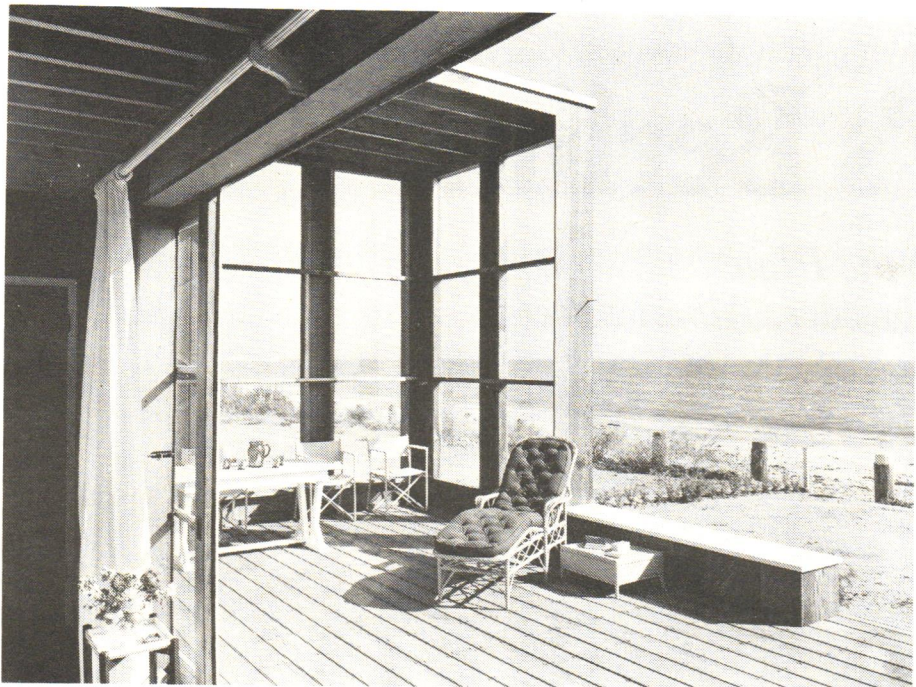


East facade showing open stair to second floor and windscreens on the left.

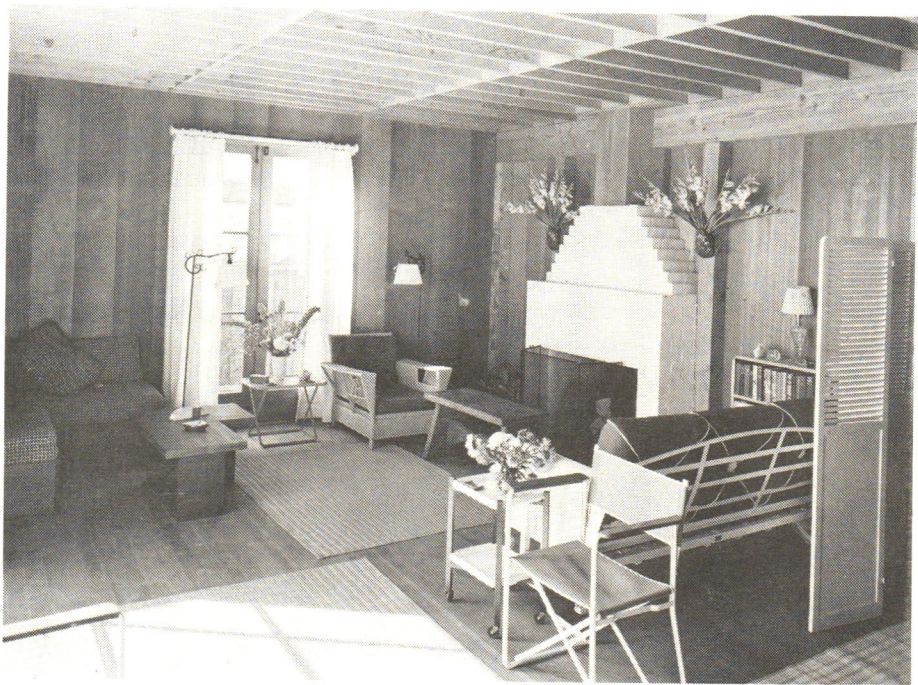


Plain entry facade. Street facade.





View of windscreen frame towards the ocean through opened sliding glass doors in living room.



Single-wall construction of living room with brick fireblocks and metal chimney flu.

## Dearborn Clark House Aptos, California 1937, A Rural House

A vacation house, the Dearborn Clark house (1937) in Aptos Beach, California achieved in the fullest sense a self-conscious blending of California vernacular building forms and European Modern movement sources. The occasional and informal use of the house allowed a thematic statement which had never been so clearly articulated in Wurster's work. Yet for all the self-conscious localism there is a striking coincidence to an archetypal boathouse form use, published by Clemens Holzmeister<sup>9</sup> in 1929. As striking and suggestive as the comparison with the work of this Viennese regionalist who had a similar importance to his local architectural community as Wurster has had to San Francisco.



Clemens Holzmeister, boat haus on the Attersee (Austria), *Moderne Bauformen* 1929.

The archetypal nature of the form is nevertheless underlined (perhaps critically) by its similar appearance in a vernacular building on the west side of Lake Tahoe, California in this building of unknown age. So the possibility that Wurster knew the form from both sources characterizes his ability and need to bridge cultures and dates for sources of his own designs which tended to be of generalized and culturally deeply-rooted archetypal forms. So for the Clark house, Wurster chose a boat house as inspiration. Yet this house is an expression of the beauty and power of the ocean. The house conceptually and actually opens itself to this body of water, while providing simple and somewhat abbreviated human shelter from the sea. The house is a summer shelter, a human 'boat house' with fireplace for heat when needed. It was not meant to be anything more; it was impossible to insulate because of the single-wall construction and its style forced the inhabitants into an unconventional life style so there was a sense of adventure and a freedom from the standard aspects of 'house maintenance' which presumably freed the owners to do other things. This house (as his earlier Pasatiempo works) can be interpreted as an expression of social values in which some practical values have been sacrificed to allow for artistic priorities and in the careful selection by both architect and owner have produced an especially evocative work. Architecturally, the building is a two-story wooden 'crate,' the lower one broader than the upper. The back elevation at the cliff, which makes a solid wall behind the house, is plain with small utilitarian openings. The building opens up to the ocean on the opposite side with a pair of overscaled glass doors on barn sliding tracks.

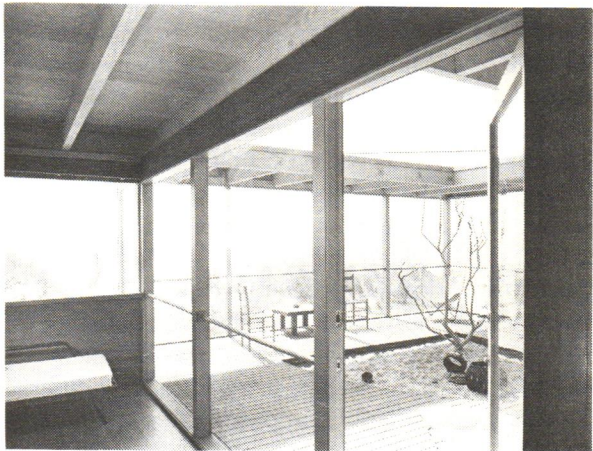
This is not roofed so the sun warms this living room during the day. At either end of the deck are the two overscaled wind screens which give the building a strong formal impact on this facade. Wurster's interest in this form of porches with enclosed rooms at each end can be traced back to his fondness for Spanish California adobes via the San Francisco nineteenth century house back porch wind screen enclosure. Rarely did Wurster permit this wind-screen element to dominate in his designs as successfully as here. It produced a successful combination of enclosure and openness, with glass which allows a wind break, while its large scale allows collected heat to pass out. The as it were 'missing' interior finishes accentuate the other 'missing' features in the house. For example, the fireplace is designed much like an unfaced fireplace, a conscious effort to glorify the firebox as artifact rather than the conventional finished surface. The kitchen was spare without many standard residential conveniences, the lack of enclosure of the stair to second floor is another 'missing' link, an additional self-conscious thematic economy, and the previously mentioned seaside porch-cover over the sliding doors is missing, providing the needed warmth and sunshine. The upstairs had no closet doors. The sinks in each bedroom coupled with the utilitarian exposed sheathing made the character somewhat like a Victorian rooming house. The out-door connection between bedroom and living room had been used with many variations by Wurster and had the quality of lengthening the sense of distance between the parts of the house.

Although the form of this work is strong, the magic of the Clark house comes through the single-wall construction, a technique used in California in very utilitarian houses and agricultural buildings. A stud or post and beam frame supports a single layer of tongue and groove boards on the outside. There is no interior finish material. All wiring and plumbing are exposed. There is no building paper, nailing must be exact and the detailing of doors and windows becomes a special problem. As a result, what initiated as a self-conscious, cost-saving idea admittedly became more involved and costly than a conventionally framed wall system. This kind of constructional bravura is an arresting experience and somewhat professionally chauvenistic for it absolutely forbids any standard concerns for interior design other than the architectural detail of the construction itself.<sup>10</sup>

The memories of the Clark house have been so powerful that generations of architects used this as a thematic source, such as the Yeazell beach house at Stinson Beach by Joseph McCarthy<sup>11</sup> in 1950, and the early '60s Chaet beach house by Robert Ratcliffe,<sup>12</sup> in Aptos. So we see that Wurster's commitments to both his place within a specific regional and national cultural history, as well as within the current architectural view, was and continues to be a richly woven mesh offering strength and continuity to the still semi-formed architectural heritage of the Northern California area. ●

—William P. Coburn

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Joseph McCarthy, 1950. Yeatull Beach House, Stinson Beach. Glass enclosed windscreen atrium with careful wood detailing.

All photographs of W. Wurster's work are by kind permission of Roger Sturtevant.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Wurster began his practice in 1926 and continued to 1943, at which time did planning research and study at Harvard, and was briefly an Assistant Professor of Architecture at Yale ultimately becoming the Dean of Architecture at MIT in 1944 to 1950. He returned to California to practice actively until his death in 1973.

<sup>2</sup>Wurster travelled through Europe in 1937 where he saw many modern buildings. Parallels suggested in this article are taken from publications found in the Wurster Bernardi and Emmons library.

<sup>3</sup>The Monterey colonial style was a period revival style developed as a California variant of the 18th Century Colonial Revival style which pervaded America in the 1920s and '30s. Survival styles of 18th Century origin which were built in and around Monterey in the 1830s and '40s by Yankee settlers served as prototypes for this mode. Wurster borrowed heavily from this imagery in his early works, and in fact never fully discarded many proportional devices originating with these historical buildings.

<sup>4</sup>Helen Forbes work includes a fresco 'Noah and his Ark' at the Mother's House at Fleishaker Playfield, S.F. (1933-38). She was a native San Francisco artist who studied in France, Germany as well as San Francisco.

<sup>5</sup>Although the basic design was done with Wurster, Theodore Bernardi was the designer in charge who was responsible for much of the design development and detailing, others worked under his direction, Donn Emmons had built a study model of the project, and did some presentation drawing of the main reception room.

<sup>6</sup>Mrs. Sigmund Stern, benefactress of the building, had originally hired N.Y. architect Harvey Wiley Corbett. Through Howard Myers of Architectural Forum, Wurster was hired as the architect. At this point, Wurster took over the design and Corbett reviewed it as a consultant. It was Corbett who suggested the two dormitory wings be played to improve views from the dormitory rooms. This building was enlarged by Wurster Bernardi and Emmons in the 1950s.

<sup>7</sup>Major examples: Golden Gateway, San Francisco  
Schuckl & Co. Building, Sunnyvale, California  
Valencia Gardens, San Francisco

<sup>8</sup>Maybeck used this technique repeatedly in:  
Alma Kennedy Studio, Berkeley 1913  
Hotel Clyde, California 1918  
Principia College, Elmhurst, Illinois 1932

<sup>9</sup>Clemens Holzmeister, boat house, published *Moderne Bauformen*, Feb. 1929.

<sup>10</sup>Recent additions to the building have been done by Donn Emmons who worked with Barbara Butler, an interior designer familiar with Wurster's work who was able to integrate sensitively the building construction detailing as a decorative motif.

<sup>11</sup>Francis Joseph McCarthy worked in the Wurster office before starting his own practice. He consciously used Wurster motives in his work.

<sup>12</sup>Robert Ratcliffe states that general Bay Area attitudes have produced similarities of his work to Wurster's.



# Hitler's Berlin:

*A New Look at the Plan  
of Nazi Masterbuilder, Albert Speer*

The general outline of Nazi plans for reshaping Berlin became widely known with the publication in 1970 of *Inside the Third Reich*, the memoirs of Hitler's one time chief architect, Albert Speer. These have remained the only major source of information on the project until recently, when original drawings and photographs from the 1930s came to light. This new graphic evidence, along with German language material from the '30s, has mainly provided detailed confirmation of what many readers suspected from Speer's brief account of his work. Yet in addition, the new documents frequently cast his designs in a surprisingly different light, contradicting the simplistic and sometimes wholly inaccurate views now prevalent.<sup>1</sup>

In his memoirs, Speer describes the plan of what was essentially a Berlin Champs Elysées many times the size of the Paris original. (Fig. 1). A five mile long, north-south boulevard which terminated at a triumphal arch was envisioned (with a subordinate east-west axis crossing it below the Koenigsplatz). It would extend along the western edge of the old monumental core, and would be lined with sumptuous ministries, cultural buildings, and the headquarters of German industry—all of tremendous scale—as well as luxury shops, cinemas, and theaters, at street level.

Here was a blazing declaration of the political, military, and economic might of the reborn Germany, grandiose enough to command international attention. However, this massive physical display was not intended merely to express, but to *impress*. It was calculated to intimidate foreigners, especially visiting dignitaries, as well as internal dissidents. Particularly as the setting for military parades, mass rallies and speeches, the Nazi boulevards, plazas, etc. would not be mere passive emblems of power, but active generators of it. The whole new central city would create a multi-faceted political theater of colossal proportions, a physical and psychological stage set for the Nazi drama.

How can we evaluate all of this? It is easy to dismiss the Berlin Plan as simply the megalomaniac fantasy of a demented chancellor, the product of the aberrant political ideology of Nazism, or the unconscionable desecration of an historic European capital. Certainly the Plan *was* Hitler's personal play thing, a sophisticated toy for a dilettante architect. But it was also in some ways a distinctly Nazi statement about urbanism. And it not only violated the scale of the old royal residence city and its environs, but evinced a cavalier disregard for the structure of the existing capital and the urgent problems already pressing upon it.

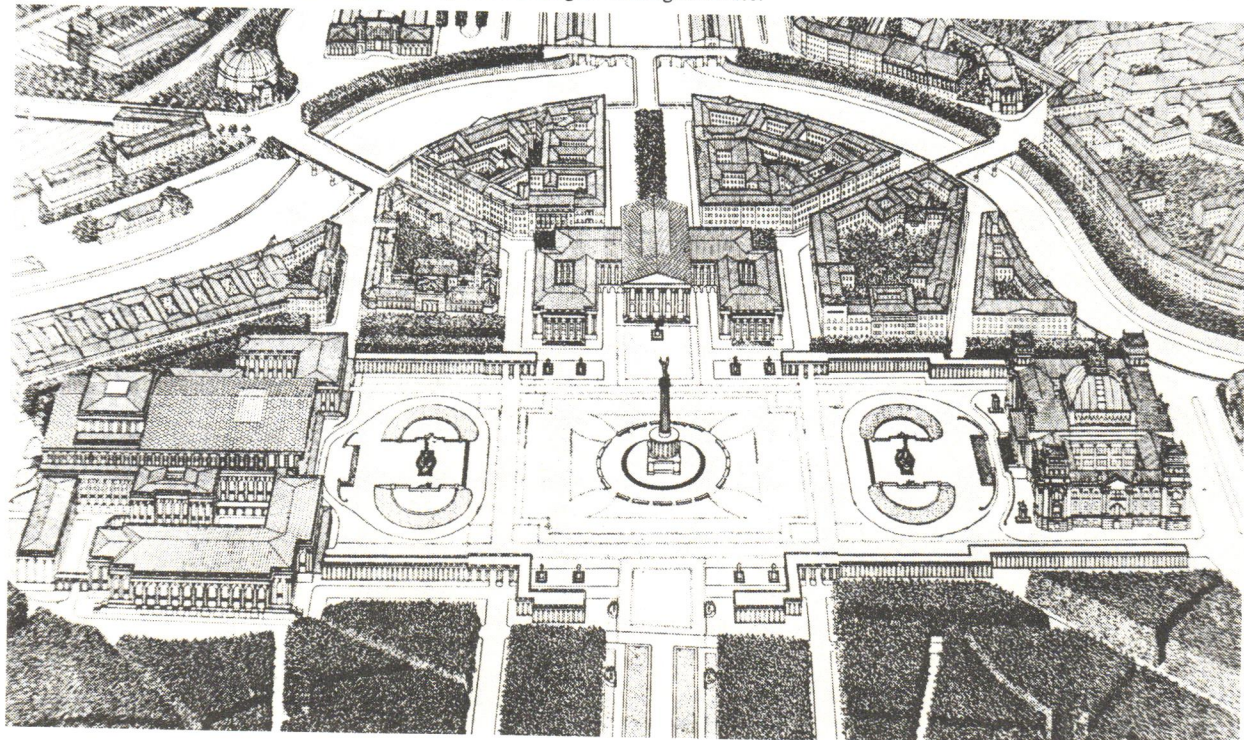
Yet this is not the whole truth, and barely the truth at all in some cases. A major surprise is that, rather than being predominantly a unique Nazi vision of Berlin—an impression actively fostered by the Party—Speer's designs for the central city drew heavily on the past. They not only incorporated the existing nationalist ensemble surrounding the Koenigsplatz, but they also were simply the latest in a long series of proposals for the completion and extension of that complex. In addition, the Berlin designs revealed an awareness of many of the progressive themes current in city planning, though in this case the ideas were often diluted where they came into conflict with the mainly political purposes being served. The Berlin Plan was no isolated event.

The Koenigsplatz, lying just west of Brandenburg



Photo taken from '40s Party book shows Speer with the Fuehrer looking over the master plan for Berlin.

(Fig. 2) Proposal for completing the Berlin Koenigsplatz, Otto March, 1912. View to north with existing national Parliament (Reichstag) Buildings to the right and with Bismarck monument facing it. Victory Column is in center and war hero Moltke monument to left. The proposed new opera is also to the left, and at top is a building of undesignated use.





Gate, had developed gradually since the birth of modern Germany around 1870. By the early years of the 20th century, the square was bordered by the national Parliament (Reichstag) Buildings on its eastern edge, and the Ministry of Interior (originally War) on the northwest. Within the square lay the Victory Column and monuments to such heroes as Bismarck, Moltke, and Roon. The centrally located portrait sculptures were later continued down either side of a Victory Avenue running south from the Koenigsplatz.

The main elements of the ensemble can be seen in a 1912 proposal by Otto March for finishing the square (Fig. 2). The view looks north with the existing Reichstag to the east, and suggested additions to the west and north (an opera house and undesignated building, respectively), and new colonades tying the whole together.

As March and numerous others had earlier done, Speer picked up on the nationalist theme in designing his own Koenigsplatz.<sup>2</sup> However, while following their lead, Speer fashioned a symbol, not of the past, but clearly reflective of the new Nazi order. The central feature was a People's Hall, shown on the north (top) side of the Koenigsplatz in Figure 3. While other elements from this first full draft of the project were later much embellished, their positions were early established. A new Chancellery was planned for the Fuehrer on the west side of the square. (A large, ostentatious wing was added to the existing Chancellery nearby from 1938 to 1939, and so pleased Hitler that he ordered even more elaborate plans for the Koenigsplatz site). A chancellery staff building was to lie to the southwest and the Headquarters of the Armed Forces to the southeast.

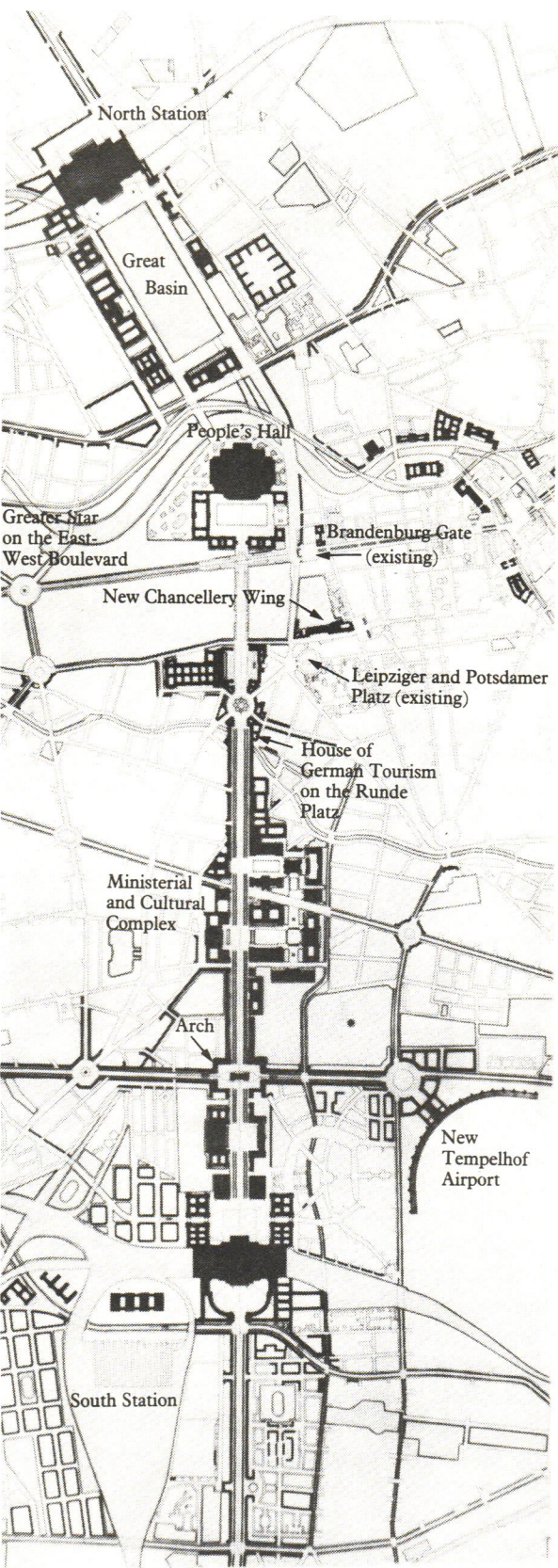
Obviously, the dominant structure was the Hall. Although it demanded vast proportions to make it the focal point of an urban complex that was already overscaled, this was not the only reason for its size. It intentionally dwarfed the old Reichstag Buildings just to the east, thus delivering a delicious architectural slur on the traditional legislative process.

Though nominally maintaining elections, Hitler would ultimately replace the old politics with an entirely new system: the German people communing with and directly guided by their Fuehrer, without the cumbersome intermediary of representative government. The Hall did not simply celebrate this new political vision: it literally embodied it. In this respect the Hall was the only distinctly Nazi building in the whole Plan. Here some 150,000 to 180,000 Party faithful could gather—standing alertly, not lounging in comfortable theater seats—to be addressed by Hitler (Fig. 4). The central arena must also have been planned as a place for military and other displays.

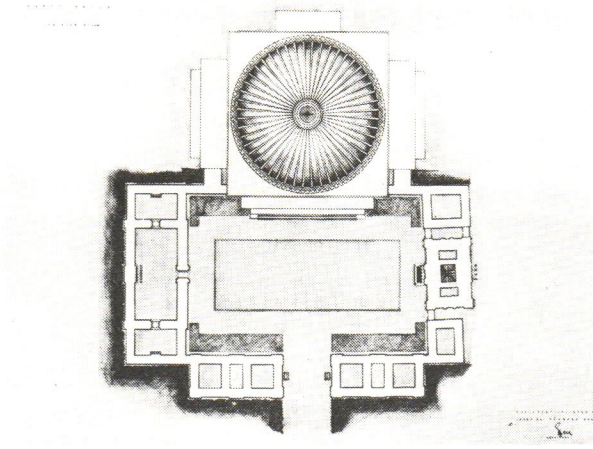
If not wholly intentional, it is at least apt that Speer should have combined two particular Roman Imperial masterpieces—the domed Pantheon and the Colosseum—for his interior. The first was the home of myriad ancient gods, the second a scene of politically motivated popular diversions. One might see merged in Speer's Hall, then, the diverse elements of National Socialist self-deification and seduction of the masses, or taken together, the sanctification of mob rule and its priesthood of demagoguery—incipient populist theocracy.

In its own unique way, however, the Hall also had a place within various larger ensembles, which illustrates some fundamental characteristics of the whole Plan. One representative example is the handling of axiality within the Koenigsplatz. In Figure 2, three existing axes are seen; one generally east-west, with the Reichstag and proposed opera at either end; a second entering the square from the north and bisecting the other proposed building; and a third leaving the square to the south at a considerable angle from the latter, along the Victory Avenue. The problem for all designers was how to reconcile these three, particularly the diverging angle of the southern axis.

Many envisioned accepting the Victory Avenue as it was and maintaining rectilinearity on the upper three sides of the square. By contrast, Speer designated the southern axis as primary, partly because of the central position of the Hall in the entire scheme. In any case, the side of Speer's Koenigsplatz on which the Reichstag stands is clearly out of square with the rest. This might be taken as a clever finesse, not appreciable at the scale of the whole. More accurately, it is an example of the dissonances caused by a host of negative design factors: the demonic timetable established by Hitler (he called it the "American tempo"), numerous rigid program

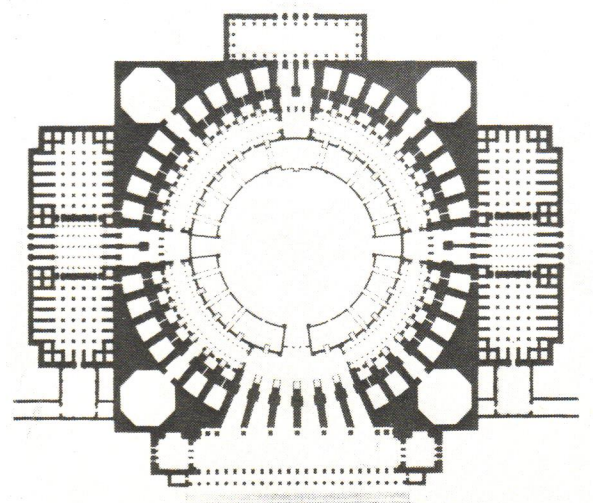


(Fig. 1) Plan for Central Berlin, July, 1938.



(Fig. 3) Plan for People's Hall on the Koenigsplatz, Albert Speer, April, 1937. Speer's drawing shows the existing Reichstag Buildings to the right. The proposed are the Hall at top, second new Chancellery to the left, Chancellery Staff Building to bottom left, and the Armed Forces Headquarters to bottom right.

(Fig. 4) People's Hall in Berlin, plan by Albert Speer, April, 1937. This is the first full draft of the project, later expanded and elaborated.



requirements set down—often “intuitively”—by the Fuehrer, and the seemingly superficial evaluation of the site. Numerous conflicts were never wholly resolved. Typically, as here, opposing plan elements were unceremoniously wrenched together.

The Hall raises another much broader issue, that of Nazi urbanism and urban design. The particular combination of functional units on the Koenigsplatz, for instance—the Hall, Reichstag, Chancellery, etc.—produced an image of the proposed National Socialist power structure. Yet such specifically governmental complexes were only one part of a larger concept of community underlying the Berlin design.

According to Party ideology, present urban society was badly fragmented and dominated by the interests of various individuals and groups. Pervasive social disintegration was reflected in the fact that buildings of the powerful few were erected with little regard for each other, which created discordant patterns. In seeking to overcome divisive individualism, it was suggested that the physical city itself must be reshaped in line with the new social ideals. Buildings serving the entire community must be given precedence, in particular at the city center.

This is clearly a basic theme of the Berlin Plan. Despite the numerical preponderance of commercial buildings—corporate headquarters, shops, restaurants—along the five-mile boulevard, the dominance by scale and position of the Hall, triumphal arch and other key monuments maintained the balance in favor of “community” buildings.

However, there was nothing particularly “Nazi” about all of this either. National Socialism shared its general critique of the capitalist city with numerous predecessors beginning with Marx and Engels. Even the specific concept of a dominant city center, especially a single high building, was developed before the 1930's by several avant-garde German designers, all with eminently more humanitarian motives than the National Socialists. The formers' ideas, probably seen most clearly in the “City Crown” of Bruno Taut (1919), were monstrously corrupted by Speer's Hall, both philosophically and aesthetically. The socialist community which Taut saw as the new form of Christendom, with its focus on the common good of all people everywhere, was as far from the narrowly racist and nationalist community of the Nazi Volk as the shimmering house of glass that crowned Taut's city was from Speer's ponderous reincarnation of the Pantheon.

The Nazis were also not the first to struggle with the knotty problems of capital city design, though their solutions did differ somewhat in kind as well as degree from others. Much of the difficulty in evaluating this aspect of the Plan derives from the question of politics. We instinctively sense that the Plan is highly “political”—even judge it to be *too* political. What do we mean?

Certainly all city plans are political to the degree that they rely on the approval of legally constituted authority in order to proceed, and demand the commitment of public and/or private economic resources to be executed—two very different aspects of “power.” Beyond this though, by their very nature as government centers, all capital cities suffer certain inherently political problems not shared with other urban types, including special functional and aesthetic dilemmas. A variety of bureaucratic activities compete for space with more “normal” commercial, residential, recreational and other uses. The almost universal desire to raise architectural monuments to expressions of state power conflicts with other formal goals, perhaps a more human scale.

Hitler's Berlin was not really different in any of this. What distinguished it was not so much the literal spatial demands made on the city—though the relative scale and coverage envisioned were extraordinary—but the type of political uses to which the Party sought to put Berlin, and the peculiar nature of the Nazi power base.

In the modern period, vast new government-sponsored centers are generally the offspring of reasonably secure, established regimes, for economic reasons if nothing else. By contrast, when the Berlin Plan was conceived, the Nazis were still struggling to win and hold power, trying to consolidate an ideological revolution, internationally as well as domestically. Consequently they produced an uncommon urban design, less a plan for a city than what we have already called a political “theater.” The emphasis was not on the exercise of power



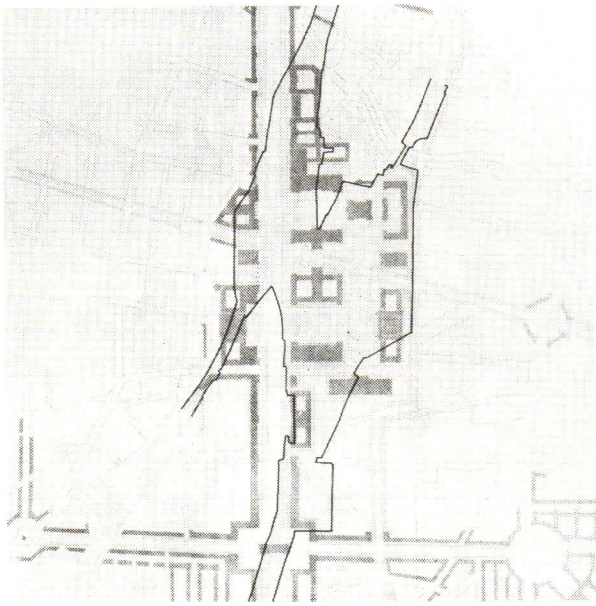
within a stable system, but the acquisition and legitimization of power.

Not only was the Berlin Plan conceived during the early phase of the Nazi revolution, but the Party also acutely felt the memory of another recent upheaval, the overthrow of the German monarchy in 1918. Whether or not the Nazi political base was ever extremely fragile, Hitler and others in the Party often acted as if it were. As regards the Berlin project, the policies on plan execution for instance, were surprisingly conservative. In contrast to the popular image of absolute Party control and arrogant self-assurance, Speer and his staff proceeded with great caution. Historic building sites were avoided or structures were preserved at new locations. Despite unprecedented legal authority (e.g., wide powers of expropriation even outside the municipal boundaries), land acquisition occurred primarily by traditional, negotiated purchase agreements.

This policy of pacifying public sentiment was greatly aided by the fact that the majority of the new boulevard was to be built on vast in-town rail yards—possibly as much good luck as clever planning. (The former Anhalter and Potsdamer yards are illustrated in Fig. 5, overlaid on the central section of the boulevard). In any event, the real benefit here was not financial, but political. It was not that this property was undeveloped—as the Party press claimed—but that it was already in the hands of the German Railways system and therefore did not have to be acquired. The acrimony normally associated with large-scale land assembly was thus neatly avoided.

The location of these rail yards was a major factor in the siting and orientation of Speer’s entire boulevard, although the presence of the existing national complex surrounding the Koenigsplatz and numerous previous proposals for its completion and enlargement certainly played a major role. Figure 5 in particular illustrates the shallow opportunism of the Plan. If we assume that the rail yards were chosen largely because they were already owned by a government agency, then the asymmetrical layout of the central ministerial and cultural complex—within a design of generally rigid formality—might be thought more the product of political expediency than any compelling aesthetic or functional logic.

The matter of railroads leads us back to another area where the Berlin Plan looked to the past. Especially since the Greater Berlin Competition of 1910, the German capital had been a center of progressive city planing activity. Dealing with such questions as transportation, parks and recreation, and industrial distribution on a regional basis was of major importance, with Berlin actually achieving metropolitan government in 1920. In particular, the



(Fig. 5) Ministerial and Cultural Complex with existing rail yards overlaid, January, 1937.

consolidation of numerous deadstop rail stations in the city had long been discussed, as well as the urgent need to provide a direct northsouth link for long distance traffic.

Both these issues were addressed in the Speer plans, yet the solutions were timid. He proposed routing all traffic through two “union” terminals, a North and South Station, hardly an innovative idea in 1936. And rather than proceeding to supply the desperately needed north-south rail connection by linking his two stations, Speer then simply decided to add long distance tracks to the Ring Railway that presently skirted well around the city. The reason seems clear. Land needed by Hitler for politically persuasive architecture was not to be usurped as a mere transportation corridor. Progressive planning ideas were countenanced only so far as they did not conflict with the ultimate objectives of the Plan.

One further point about Figure 5 concerns still other historical connections. Design proposals for Berlin preceding Speer’s work with Hitler have already been mentioned, along with such foreign influences as urban programs in Paris. The other major source of formal themes was Vienna. Next to the Champs Elysées design, dearest to Hitler’s heart was the mid-19th century Ringstrasse, a district developed on the site of the demolished city fortifications. The pattern of large free-standing buildings was the key feature the Fuehrer assimilated there, contrasting with the continuous, street-oriented development along the boulevard elsewhere in the Plan.

A note of caution here. The obvious foreign

models may not ultimately be the most significant. Despite the dominance of basically French and Austrian forms, the Berlin project was probably inspired as much by the contemporaneous design activity of Germany’s brother fascists as by urban plans of the past. The latter created an internationally known array of precedents upon which all designers could draw. However, each country developed its individual approach to the boulevard or plaza for instance, and these distinctively national traditions, passing freely between the various totalitarian regimes, were more influential than the common historical models they all shared. The Moscow Plan of 1935, various designs for Madrid and Rome, as well as some provincial work are important here.

One motif is particularly significant for suggesting the influence of Mussolini’s architects—something Speer has been loath to admit. It is the rectangular plaza dominated by a bell tower (“campanile”) standing independently at one corner. This traditional Italian configuration, practically unknown in Germany, was reworked by Fascist designers beginning in the 1920’s and employed especially in the Duce’s new town projects. While not directly a part of the Berlin plans, examples do occur in other Nazi work. Entries to a Dresden Adolf-Hitler-Platz competition in 1935 were the earliest, appearing more than a year before Speer began work in Berlin.<sup>4</sup>

These are the major conclusions from this study of Speer’s designs. Two points on which commentators have frequently been misinformed remain to be cleared up. How much of the Berlin Plan was built and what survives? Considering the size of the entire proposal, very, very little was ever completed and even less remains. Despite Speer’s inexplicable statement in his memoirs that masses of trees planted in the Grunewald—outside central Berlin—were the only part of the whole scheme still extant, this is not the case. However, it is not too far wrong.

By 1939 all major construction had been finished or was well underway. The opulent New Chancellery Wing stood on the Voss Strasse, well known as an independent project long before Speer’s revelations about a comprehensive plan for central Berlin. The House of German Tourism was rising on the Runde Platz (shown in model form in Fig. 6), the only building completed which lay directly along the proposed north-south boulevard. A more than four mile stretch of the east-west boulevard had been opened (part of which is shown in Fig. 7). This in fact was produced by doubling the breadth of the existing Charlottenburg Chausée to equal the nearly 200 foot wide Unter den Linden, which it joined at the Brandenburg Gate west of the old city. Along this east-west axis and southwest of the People’s

(Fig. 6) Runde Platz looking west to the House of German Tourism, model, published in 1941.







(Fig. 7) The new east-west boulevard looks east from the Greater Star toward Brandenburg Gate, with the old city beyond, ca. 1941.





(Fig. 8) Victory Column is located on Greater Star Street with guard houses and street lamps by Albert Speer, ca. 1941.

Hall, the present Greater Star had been much expanded and became the new home of the Victory Column (Fig. 8), along with the Bismarck, Moltke and Roon monuments. These had been removed from the Koenigsplatz to create a completely unobstructed surface for outdoor rallies of up to a million people. A tambour had been added to the Victory Column to increase its height, and four guard houses surrounded the circular plaza, one of which is just visible at the left. These were designed personally by Speer, as were the street lamps.

Of all this, how much still stands? Practically nothing. The two wholly original architectural efforts have disappeared almost completely, the New Chancellery Wing very soon after the war. It had been partly destroyed during the final siege of Berlin. The Russians razed what was left in 1947 and used the marble to construct a war memorial outside the city in Treptow. The site is now a grassy mound in the East German sector, directly behind the Wall.

The House of German Tourism fared better (Fig. 9). Though damaged, it survived until 1966, when it was removed to make way for the new National Library, "Staatsbibliothek" (Fig. 10). There is a certain historic irony here. During their rise to power in the late 1920s, the Nazis vilified 'Modern' German architecture and its supposed close connection with the Weimar Republic, a regime the Party was battling fiercely to unseat. This policy was concocted of both political cynicism and genuine philistine rage. While the designer of the new National Library, Hans Scharoun, was not directly a part of the Bauhaus movement—the so-called "steel and glass" architects singled out by the Nazis for special scorn—Scharoun was a major pioneer of 1920's modernism. He also designed the Berlin Philharmonic (1960-63) just north of his Library, again along Speer's proposed north-south boulevard.

The full force of poetic justice was finally administered with the addition to this complex of the New National Gallery (1965-68). The designer was Mies van der Rohe, founding member of the Berlin avant-garde and one-time head of the hated Bauhaus.

Of Hitler's entire grandiose scheme for central Berlin, the sole survivor, then, is a stretch of east-west axis including the Greater Star, a tiny legacy

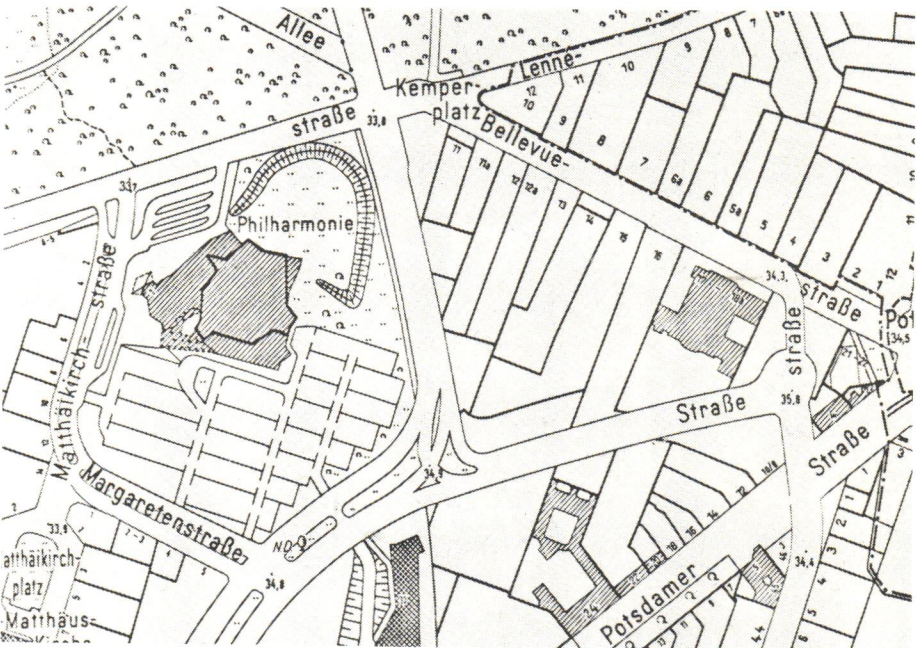
indeed. Yet a renovated boulevard and a rehoused collection of monuments from the past are an apt comment on the whole Nazi "revolution," a movement whose only genuine innovation seems to have been the Holocaust. As a contribution to our urban heritage, the Fuehrer's project for Berlin is also fittingly memorialized. The fact that pitifully little remains from a design of such colossal proportions bespeaks the true narrowness of its underlying concept. It attests to a social and environmental vision of unprecedented meanness. ●

—Stephen D. Helmer

Stephen D. Helmer received his PhD in Architecture at Syracuse University at Ithaca in 1980.



(Fig. 9) Map of wartime destruction in Berlin. Detail shows wedge-shaped House of German Tourism (cf. Fig. 6) center left, with Kemper Platz near top center, published 1951.



(Fig. 10) General site of House of German Tourism with Kemper Platz near top center, 1975.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>My work on the Berlin project is based mainly on a folio of twenty-five hand-colored photographs of general and detail ground plans, part of a large group of captured war documents held by the US government. The complete results are recorded in a dissertation finished May 1980 at Cornell University, *Hitler's Berlin: Plans for Reshaping the Central City Developed by Albert Speer*. [To date, it is the only comprehensive study in English, and is now under consideration for publication.]

Another collection of model photos and other material has come into the hands of the Swedish scholar Lars Olof Larsson, and is largely reproduced and discussed in his *Die Neugestaltung der Reichshauptstadt: Albert Speers General-bebauungsplan fuer Berlin* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1978). As the second titles indicate, Larsson deals with the entire general plan for the capital, while I have focused on the central boulevard design.

A detailed documentation of the numerous individual buildings of the Berlin project, surely from Speer's personal archive, is presently being carried out by Wolfgang Schaeche in Berlin [and should be completed soon].

<sup>2</sup>The name "royal" square was kept presumably because it provided links with authoritarian rulers of the past as well as identifying Nazism with the glories of the German Empire that had preceded the now discredited Weimar Republic of the 1920s. (The latter had changed the name to Platz der Republik). The term Adolf Hitler Platz was only envisioned for the future.

<sup>3</sup>This is not to say that little real effort was expended on the Plan. The whole scheme was worked out in elaborate detail by a full-time design organization working under Speer and employing lavish technical means for visualization. A large number of drawings of the central boulevard and detailed studies of the Hall ensemble were produced at 1:4000 scale. Several models of the boulevard were built at 1:1000 scale—one of which still exists in Speer's private collection. Most of the numerous individual

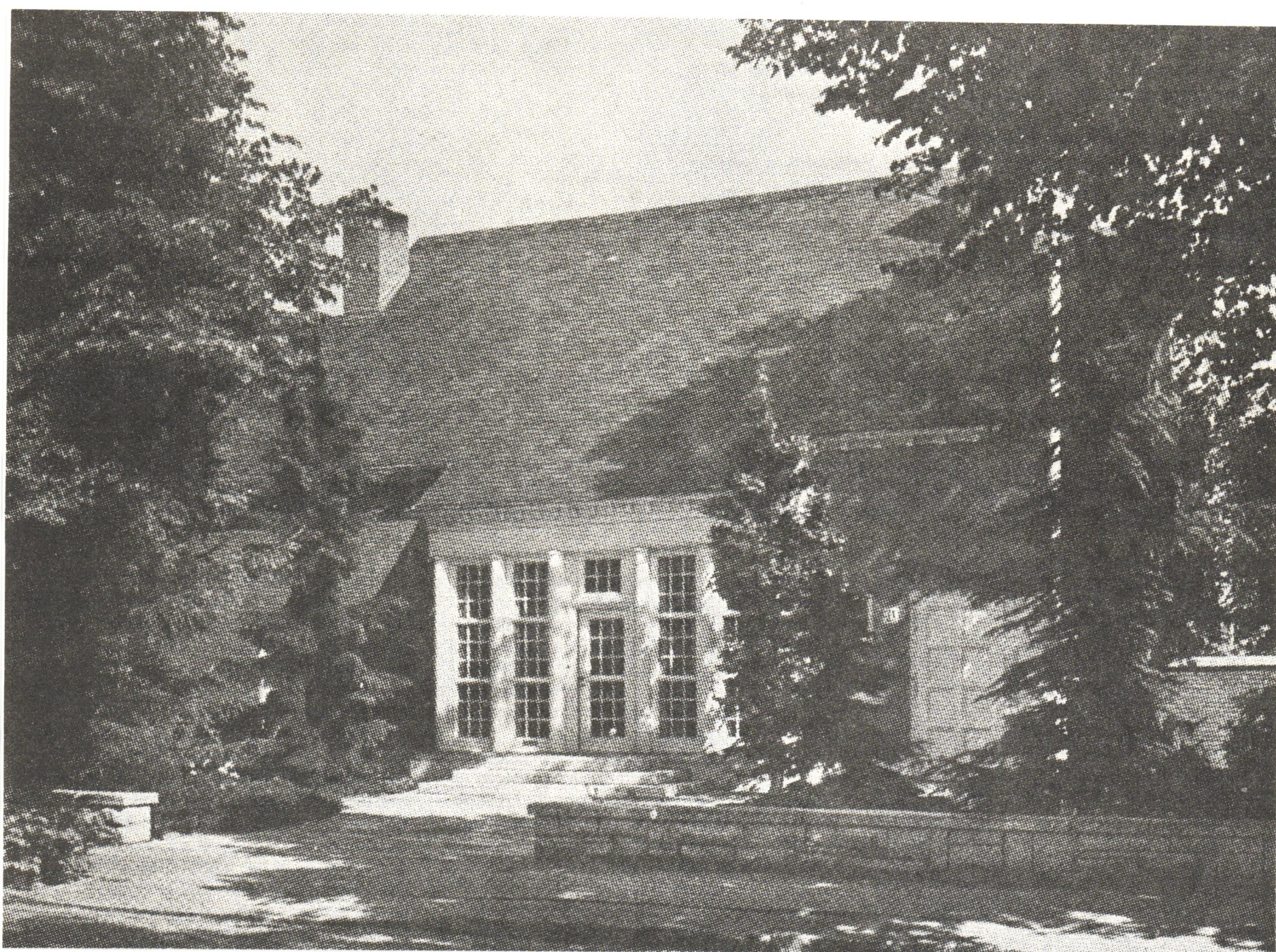
structures were also modeled at 1:50 (Fig. 6 is an example). Even full-scale mock-ups of certain building sections were constructed outside the city in Treptow.

<sup>4</sup>The two Dresden entries were by A.M. Schmidt (first prize) and Heinrich Schaefer (third prize), and were not as close to the Italian model as some others, such as the highly faithful reproductions done by Hermann Giesler, a designer entrusted by Hitler with replanning central Munich as Speer was doing in Berlin. So far his proposals for plazas in Weimar and Augsburg can only be dated to their publication in a 1941 Party volume.

## Illustration Sources

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  2. Hegemann and Peets, *The American Vitruvius* (New York: The Architectural Book Publishing Co., 1922), p. 65.
  - also appeared in: Werner Hegemann, "Turmhaus am Reichstag?!", *Monatshefte fuer Baukunst und Staedtebau* (1930), p. 97. [published in Berlin by Ernst Wasmuth]
  3. LC
  4. LC
  5. LC
  6. Albert Speer, ed. *Neue Deutsche Baukunst* (Berlin: Volk und Reich Verlag, 1941), p. 66 [This is a Party publisher, I believe.]
  7. *Neue Deutsche Baukunst*, p. 64.
  8. *Neue Deutsche Baukunst*, p. 65.
  9. *Karte von Berlin*, Der Senat von Berlin/Hauptamt fuer Vermessung, 1951, Blatt 4233.
  10. *Karte von Berlin*, Der Senator fuer Bau- und Wohnungswesen, 1975, Blatt 4233.
- [9 & 10 are published by a Berlin, possibly German national, agency. "Government" publications, at least.]





House facade from the street

Albert Speer: Architectur, published by PROPYLAEN, 78.

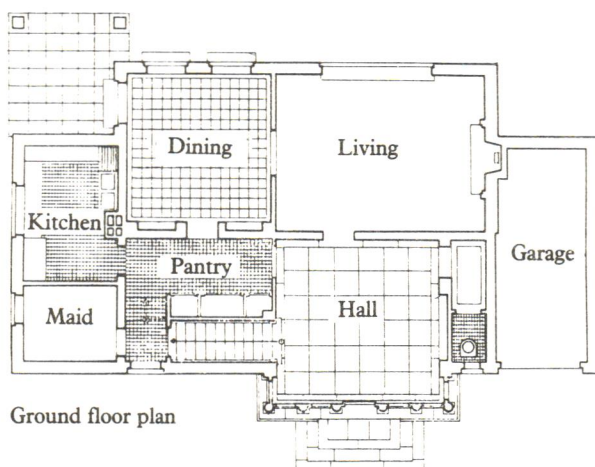
## Speer House Nikolasee, Berlin – 1935

This simple, dignified house designed by Albert Speer for his family stood in an affluent Berlin suburb, a Berlin well described by Nabokov in his '30s novels set in Berlin.

The deliberate use of traditional materials, bright red klinker brick, blue-grey slate roof and crisply painted contrasting white woodwork, derives from the local north German domestic building tradition. On the street, the imposing facade is cleverly arranged to feature the double height entry hall glazed between loadbearing wooden columns resting on their travertine stepped plinth. Speer incorporates Hitler's beloved *Heimatsstil* \* into his home by draping a steeply pitched and overscaled roof down nearly one-half of the street facade. By contrast, the prim rear facade is faithful to the conservative interior divisions.

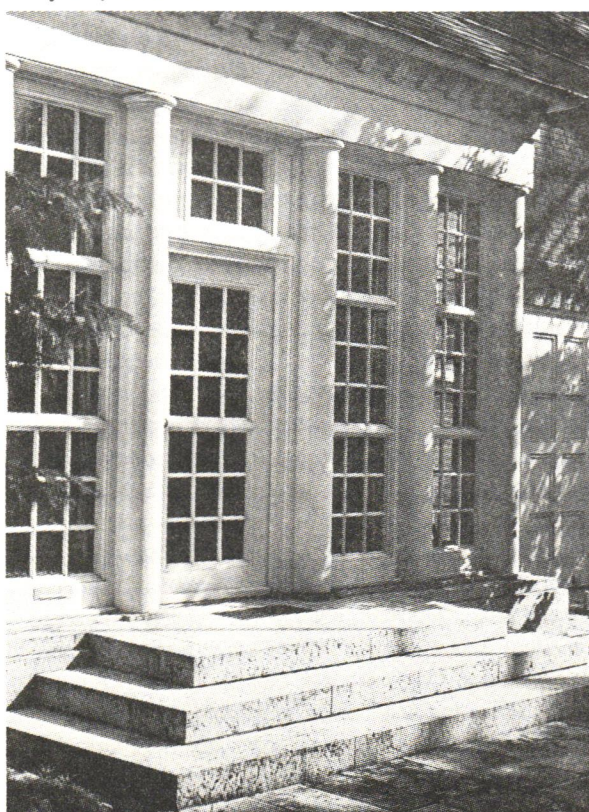
The central hall separates formal from informal functions and by virtue of its size is almost the most important unit in the house. Obviously, official life took precedence over domestic life. The hall, kitchen and dining room are joined by an open pantry, a kind of intermediate zone which also links the maid's room and the staircase to the cellar. Upstairs are two bedrooms and a bath, with access to a sundeck directly above a patio. The overall site plan is indebted to American suburban concepts so much in vogue in 1930s Germany. The open front area with a garage facing the street and the large well-tended lawn at the back wrapping around a pool are classic suburban prototypes. This image of semi-rural bliss tinted with monumentality is an interesting view into the '30s interlude where substance and propriety were the thin veil of civility.

●  
\*(traditional fatherland style)



Ground floor plan

Entry hall, street facade



Rear garden facade

Terrace and sun deck, rear facade





## Fin de Siecle

A lucid cultural and political history including the development of Vienna's turn-of-the-century urban masterplan, the Ringstrasse

## La sfera e il Labirinto

(The sphere and the labyrinth) — History and architecture according to Italy's foremost architectural historian, Manfredo Tafuri

## Thermal Delight

The primitive and the sublime in thermal appreciation

Bird's eye view of the city of Vienna and its surroundings in 1683. Etching is by Folbert van Allen. It shows the city's fortifications separating the medieval inner city from its peripheral towns. These fortifications remained until the second half of the 19th century when they were subsequently replaced by the Ringstrassen development. (Historic Museum of the City of Vienna)

## R E V I E W S



### Fin de Siècle Vienna:

Politics and Culture

by Carl E. Schorske

Knopf, New York, 1980; \$15.95.

Architects and historians in our era have at least one shortcoming in common: both fail to look at their respective fields from a point of view that accounts for the interconnected web of social, economic, cultural and political forces within which they operate. Architects often lack the ability to see their field in historical perspective and at the same time, historians are generally illiterate concerning the built environment and they limit their perspective to political and economic issues. Rarely are the constantly evolving urban patterns in which we live assessed for their role in the total context of changing patterns of culture and politics. Carl Schorske transcends these problems magnificently in *Fin de Siècle Vienna*, a book which is certainly worthwhile reading for today's architect. Schorske adeptly transcends these problems by dramatizing the potential for fuller involvement in shaping culture, and secondly, by demonstrating how influential planned development in general and the field of urban design in particular can serve as a matrix for interdisciplinary cultural change.

Schorske chose Vienna for his study in the latter part of the 19th century, a period of rebellion against static, insensitive forces of established society in a time of technological and philosophical change, for its parallels to our own times. Thus he could influence our own thinking by offering us a historical perspective.

In spite of this breadth, one can almost say that—like Mumford's social history—the main emphasis is on the role of the built environment as a catalyst in precipitating creativity and innovation with deep, long-range impact in the fields of literature, drama, art, music, architecture, urban design, psychoanalysis and—in an overriding sense—politics. For

this purpose the author uses as his main theme the Ringstrasse; his superb chapter occupying about one fourth of the volume—on this greatest of 19th-century European city modernization programs—is placed near the beginning almost as the stage set against which the action in each of the other chapters takes place. This review focusses on the Ringstrasse and its link to other fields.

My own special interest in the interconnections of these forces in the context of urban planning in Vienna stems from on-going work on the urbanization of the Dalmation Coast of Yugoslavia during the 19th century and in urban form today. Thus, in order to gain insights into urban planning in Vienna itself, and specifically to learn more about the cultural and political conditions that sparked the Ringstrasse—miniature reflections of which were evident in Dalmation towns—I spent some time there and in Budapest in the spring of 1979. Almost by accident, this visit established a base for a motivated and personal approach to reading *Fin de Siècle Vienna*. The experience of “reading” the urban form of Vienna *in situ* was enhanced by a major exhibit being held in Vienna on planning in the “liberal” period of Franz Josef, using original and rarely shown documentary material from the Municipal Archives. The two illustrations accompanying this review were published especially for the exhibit entitled *Einladung Zur Ausstellung Die Stadtebauliche Entwicklung Wiens bis 1945*.

The book is essentially a collection of biographical essays on the architects of Vienna's physical and cultural environment. Schorske is able to treat widely varying personalities and fields with conviction and authenticity. He swings as readily from politics to playwrights in tracing the lives and influences of Schnitzler and Hofmannsthal as he does from psychoanalysis to painting in tracing the works of Freud and Klimt. He shows how innovation in science and art were both stimulated by the creative forces assembled and released in the building of the vast array of cultural and institutional facilities that made up the Ringstrasse.

Indeed, in that chapter, one senses that the historian Schorske comes very close to seeing the world as an architect and urban designer, just as in writing of Klimt he seems to have adopted the eye of the artist, and in writing of Freud—that pioneer could well have been his own analyst. It is not the cross-disciplinary ability alone, but rather the artful way he has woven together the many strands of Viennese life that make the work so distinctive. He leads us through the process of cultural ecology which endured for a half century within the confines of this remarkable “garden”—a term he uses frequently for environment—that belts the ancient Vienna of the aristocracy and which symbolizes both the beginning of constitutional, upper middle-class society and its ultimate isolation. Schorske points out how much more readily this process could be put forth in Vienna than in Paris or London, where a much earlier, longer and more dispersed pattern evolved, not so clearly related to physical urban change. If we too can understand this process, might we not be able to identify our own “Ringstrassen” and their ecological relationships to cultural history taking place here and now in our own times?

In opening the book, Schorske foreshadows the

breakdown of the middle-class oriented liberal culture of Franz Josef that he hints at throughout the work, especially with the rise of the Zionist movement in the chapter on Herzl. He does this through Ravel's *La Valse*, which becomes a *danse macabre* in recording the death of the 19th-century world, a parable about how the world of the Austrian intelligentsia fell into chaos, largely through the illusory nature of the unity they thought was created—that is, the false unity of individualism in a disintegrating society. Their focus was on “rational man” in a time when the “psychological man” of the 20th century was in the process of formation. And it was out of this tradition that architecture and urban design—especially in the United States—tended to devote itself to expressing the individual rather than collective purposes of “public man.” This took the form of homes for the opulent resident, corporate structures for business, as well as in the growing ego of the designer—the highly creative yet socially lifeless works of figures like Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier, and the rank and file that followed—even unto Wurster Hall. Again, was this a force working against our own Ringstrassen, those catalysts for social change in our times?

The liberals took over in Austria at mid-century as a response and defense against the peasant revolution of 1848, and transformed Vienna physically as an expression of reformed institutional and cultural values. First Schorske describes the Ringstrasse as the visual expression of the values of that new social class and its *Ringstrassenstil* way of life and two generations later near the *fin de siècle*, as a symbolic focus of criticism against the very liberals who created it. Thus the Ringstrasse serves as a useful metaphor for the central role of society in shaping an environment and—at the same time—the role of an environment in re-shaping society.

But the plan itself was not a liberal one. In Schorske's view, it retained the Baroque commitment to open space, fulfilling the aspiration of the elite professionals and well-to-do for whose glorification it was designed. The social features of urban planning and design—public housing and healthful working places—were totally lacking. Only later did Vienna become famous for its social projects.

Since the project was directly under the monarchy, planners of the Ringstrasse were exempted from review by Vienna's municipal agencies then considering growth. The project's motto, “Beautification of the City's Image,” clearly gave no reference to deeper social purposes. Unlike Haussman's Paris, the wholesale planning and rebuilding of such a vast belt of land was possible because Vienna's fortifications, constructed to fend off the Turks in the late 17th century, remained long after other European cities had demolished theirs. A broad belt of middle-class residences—some of which were small palaces—were solidly wrapped around the open land some 600 meters in width (the dimension needed for firing a cannon) and four kilometers long, forming a gigantic horse-shoe of new urban development on the shores of the Danube. Originally intended to ward off foreign invaders, after the Revolution of 1848, it became a potential object of invasions by the oppressed peasantry. The government chose to give it and constitutional government to the middle-class under the guidance of young and forward-looking Franz Josef. Eco-





nomics proved even stronger than counter-revolutionary fears, and in 1857 Franz Josef proclaimed his intention to develop the land for civilian use, a process that touched off an unprecedented building boom of some two or three decades. The sequence of new buildings went from the most despotic (the Votiv Church) to the most egalitarian (the Rathaus and University). The inner city remained dominated by symbols of aristocracy—palaces, garrisons and churches, and while the Ringstrasse—in contrast—was studded with monumental buildings that served as symbols of the new constitutional government and liberal middle-class culture: Parliament, Rathaus, University, Museums, Parks, the Burgtheater and Opera House.

After a year of reviewing submissions to the international competition,\* the Plan was adopted in 1859. Monumental buildings, architecturally styled so as to symbolize each function, were set in open space, as Camillo Sitte later pointed out, like cakes on a platter. Rather than geometric buildings enclosing space in the early Baroque spirit, they were strung—quite independent of each other—in a new urban scale along the polyhedral boulevard intended to carry modern traffic, as indeed it does today. Tree planting in rows reinforced the name given, “Ring Street.”

While a truly Baroque plan would have joined University to suburbs with radial routes, as the Champs Elysées did Versailles, the Ringstrasse stressed a modern concept of flow and cut the inner city off from the suburbs, creating “one of the most lordly promenades,” and turning the inner city into a kind of museum. As Schorske says: “What had been a military insulation belt became a sociological isolation belt.”

Schorske describes how the style of each of these buildings symbolized the function and role in social change in a most eclectic manner: the Rathaus, a strong statement in Neo-Gothic to recall the free medieval commune; the Burgtheater in Baroque, the Parliament in Classic Revival and the University in Renaissance. He writes: “Taken as a whole, the monumental buildings of the Ringstrasse expressed well the highest values of regnant liberal culture. On the remnants of the Champs de Mars its votaries

had reared the political institutions of a constitutional state, the schools to educate the elite of a free people, and the museums and theaters to bring to all the culture that would redeem the *novi homines* from their lowly origins.”

Actually, the monumentality of the public buildings and their symbolism of political and cultural change hides the fact that most of the Ringstrasse project was devoted to large apartment buildings. Indeed, it was the sale of land for upper-class apartments that went to pay for the public improvements. The new middle class was thus won over to the liberal side by images of governmental reform and cultural enlightenment, as well as by the image of heightened social status via monumental, palace-like apartments that they not only occupied, but often participated in building for speculation. Such apartments kept many an upwardly mobile architect busy, including the pioneer modernist, Otto Wagner,

The apartments were generally four- to six-story buildings containing some 16 units: *Mietpalast* (Rent Palace) or *Wohnpalast* (Apartment Palace), as a faint recognition of their association with aristocratic status. They stood in direct contrast to the monotonous multi-story tenements called *Mietkaseren* (Rent Barracks, with its segregative Army connotation) built simultaneously in the suburbs for the working class. The pompous Rent Palaces were built largely in the 1860's, and the last of them used great differentiated classic motifs to distinguish the social and economic status according to floor levels.

However, Schorske's most lively and innovative insights emerge when he traces the lives of two of the most significant critics of the Ringstrasse, both of whom were spokesmen for urban design whose messages are taken seriously even today. Otto Wagner and Camillo Sitte rebelled against different aspects of the Ringstrasse in the 1880s and '90s. Sitte would have humanized the environmental quality by reducing the pompous scale, by enclosing open spaces and by allowing irregularity and free form through creative design based on social need. He took seriously “the historical-aesthetic aspirations of the Ringstrasse” and criticized its amalgamation with modernity. On the other hand, Wagner

denounced the “masking of modernity” in the architectural styles of the buildings and instead called for rationalism and functionalism, values which he built into his own works, as Schorske carefully documented. Both well-articulated points of view only served to stimulate debate over the intellectual underpinnings of a new aesthetic in architecture, art, and design toward the turn of the century.

Schorske enriches our knowledge of these two men by tracing their lives and the political-cultural-psychological events of their formative years, a technique used by the author throughout the book for leaders in other fields. Wagner's career, for example, spanned 50 years of the Ringstrasse development and 20 years of metropolitan expansion, and gave him a range of experiences from a classic beginning to his own form of art nouveau fostered by a close relationship with Gustav Klimt. He moved as well to the more egalitarian ideals of the late 19th century, to pioneering activities with modular construction, and finally to metropolitan-scale planning including sub-cities and vehicular flow systems, through his work with municipal engineers.

Two chapters of great interest in the story of the Ringstrasse are those dealing with Theodor Herzl's advancing politics and the Zionist movement and with Sigmund Freud's struggle for recognition parallel to Klimt. Here I can only touch on the rich material about Klimt, but of particular note is the role he played with the rebellious Secessionists in bringing together innovators in a wide range of visual design fields, including architecture. Klimt's own shift from a flattering style of painting for the elite—the murals in the Burgtheater, for example—to honest representation of the human body in the frontal nudity of his University murals later in his career—paralleled Otto Wagner's gradual shedding of classic and even art nouveau motifs to reveal basic structure and new building technologies and utilitarian functions. Schorske's passages describing the personal and professional exchanges between the two men are superbly written and provide an exciting and intimate communication from author to reader. Klimt's bold thrust toward returning to



instinct as a source of personl creativity stands forth as highly appropriate to our own time, where the individual as a creative person has become dominated by a homogenized, stereotyped society, and by high-finance and high-technology in urban development.

The “re-discovery” of Klimt in the 1960’s—along with Mahler and others of the Vienna group of creative rebels—gives the reader of Schorske’s book further opportunity to draw parallel questions of cultural change today to those of a century ago. Yet, during the ’60s, Klimt was taken up largely because of his decorative values, so predominant in his more acquiescent later years. The dynamic, activist qualities of his youth are set forth boldly. In his University murals on Philosophy, Medicine, and Jurisprudence, he retaliated almost as vigorously as Diego Rivera in Mexico against academic, scientific and political opponents of free thinking. The Philosophy mural (1900) brought out the differences between “the old ethics” and “the new aesthetics” and rallied others to take sides. Thus, like the Ringstrasse, the Secession movement played a major public role in stimulating debate over directions in Vienna’s overall culture.

Through Schorske we see in the Ringstrasse and in the Secessionist movement how art and architecture, urban design and landscape architecture as visual and functional fields, under innovative and persistent collective leadership are capable of influencing a society’s values in a given, delimited locality. Indeed, transpose end-of-the-19th century Vienna to end-of-the-20th century San Francisco and the Bay area and it would not be difficult to identify the opposing sides of similar issues: the “Manhattanization” of San Francisco, the destruction of venerable buildings that record our cultural heritage, the cleavage of social classes by clearance and re-location for corporate advantage, and the suburbanizationc of the natural and cultivated open landscape and the bay and sea shores. What will the political and cultural impact be on coming generations?

Indeed, Schorske increasingly employs the image of the “garden” as environment toward the end of the book. In “The Transformation of the Garden” he reviews the environmental Utopia of the writer Adalbert Stifter wherein science and art combined to help nature provide an ideal setting for habitat and thus a more responsible, disciplined Man, the hope of the new century. He contrasts this with a more historically realistic kind of garden—portrayed by Ferdinand von Saar—representing the narcissistic element in Viennese overly-refined society at the turn of the century and into which “the elite could withdraw in retreat from an uncongenial reality.”

The final chapter brings the 19th century to a smashing close and our 20th century to an unnerving opening. In “The Explosion in the Garden: Kokoschka and Schoenberg,” Schorske opens with Oskar Kokoschka as a child of an artisan family playing in the deteriorated garden of a now-invaded Pal’ce of the old aristocracy, and then, with a mixture of beauty and terror, leads us into the 20th century and the suggestion of the chaos in the “garden”—as cultural environment—that was to come during the two World Wars and thereafter, the main theme in Kokoscha’s work. Here Schorske offers insights for today’s architects, with their devotion to technology and finance and their isolation from the personally creative role of the artist, by tracing the intellectually stimulating alliance between Kokoschka and Adolf Loos, the pre-World War I Miesian architect, a productive relationship recalling that of Klimt and Wagner earlier.

Schorske then follows Arnold Schoenberg—Kokoschka’s parallel creative artist in the field of music—into yet another “garden.” This is via “The Book of Hanging Gardens,” a set of songs that Schoenberg put to music that set forth—as did Kokoschka’s paintings and drawings—the tension between the order of the “external reality” of the world about us—“the garden” and the personal, instinctive feelings of the individual yearning to be expressed in a changing world: the Fin de Siècle of the last century, and our own as well. Thus, Schorsek reinforces in yet another field the underlying psychological force of the other creative leaders he portrays.

In his multi-focussed history, Schorske raises questions about the past, but also about now: the book spotlights the fact that we too are nearing the end of a century of disintegrating change out of which many diverse elements among us are eagerly

seeking unity.

Questions loom about our times, our environment and its visual and cultural future: What cultural-political meaning can we derive from our environmental and urban problems and projects that have become so central to all classes in all facets of daily life? What role can an interdisciplinary group play in influencing urban politics and what would be the language of communication? Where are our Ringstrassen and our Secessionist movements? ●

—Francis Violich

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**La sfera e il labirinto.**  
*Avanguardia e architettura da Piranesi agli anni 70.*  
by Manfredo Tafuri  
Einaudi, Torino, 1980, 371 pp., L. It. 35,000

Anyone familiar with the way in which Manfredo Tafuri’s work has evolved over the last decade will not be overwhelmingly surprised by this collection of essays, all of which have appeared elsewhere but are here revised and brought up-to-date. With a problematical complexity, the book develops themes which have already surfaced in *Theory and History of Architecture* (Laterza, 1970) and which Tafuri elaborates in the dense introduction. In any case, ten years have passed, years thick—and how!—with events which have distorted the face of Italy, and I am referring to more than the citadel of architecture.

Prefaced by an ample theoretical essay (to which I shall return), the book falls into three parts: the first discusses Piranesi and, along parallel or analogous lines, Eisenstein, with a nice essay by the latter dedicated to the great Venetian printmaker. The theme of the theater surfaces in the second part, with one essay on the “virtual city” and four on the real city, especially the socialist and American city and also that of the Weimar Republic, surely among the best available on the subject. Then, with a great leap, we pass to the 1960s and 1970s, to California and New England in search of Old Europe. The chronological leap is not bothersome: with his well-known capacity for reflection, Tafuri always manages to unite shreds of artistic experiences which are quite distant from one another. But the issue is neither his talent nor his capacities: I want to evaluate the overall design which emerges from this complex structure.

Already in the title, Tafuri adopts a broad notion of avant-garde. His avant-garde is a meta-historical concept: no longer the one formulated between 1910 and 1930, but a thread which unites Piranesi and the Five Architects in an embrace untenable by normal human arms. By this point there are already more than a few possible objections; Tafuri’s avant-garde is metaphor rather than historiographical concept.

And now we come to the crux of his design: even if one shares his stated dislike for sweetened historiography, fully rounded patterns, toned down modelling, all of which partake of a ‘consoling’ tradition, one is disoriented and dismayed when confronted by the myriad alternatives Tafuri’s system poses. But Tafuri primes the engine and then—aware of the possible outcome—clarifies and attacks: “To those who accuse me of methodological eclecticism, I will answer that they are unable to accept the transitional (and thus ambiguous) role which up to the present has been assumed by a dismembered and multiform discipline such as architecture.” To be sure, I agree with the sense of what he says, but I am inclined to think that this dismembered body should be reassembled.

But who contributed to this dismemberment, this splitting, this unraveling, if not, strangely enough, those who characterize history as a state of permanent crisis? Tafuri is too experienced and subtle a scholar not to know perfectly well that the work of the historian only partially mirrors or paraphrases the work. When the historian constructs his design, he has his aims: in leafing through Tafuri’s book, those purposes become more distant; just when we think we have pinned them down, they slip away to other barely perceptible places.

The telluric agitation of Tafuri’s criticism is the

perfect foil to the genre of slick Winkelmannian or Burckhardtian historiography which had a certain weight even in the historiographical tradition of the Modern Movement, from Giedion to Behene. To bring to a fitting close his design for destabilizing historiography—in an artistic situation which already by itself has lost its head—Tafuri takes off on the recent blend of Cacciari-Nietzsche-Freud, adding a pinch of Lacan and a liberal dose of Foucault. The negative thought in this recent reproposal obscures the Marxian concept of division of labor, which ironically then recurs as a privileged reference point.

I have little faith in decanting concepts and notions elaborated in fields other than those of artistic and especially architectural language. One runs the risk (and Tafuri, as a most gifted builder of enchanted word castles, runs it deliberately) of lapsing into one perverse vice which derives from making art criticism ideological: that of sitting on the shoulders of the past (Piranesi *docet*) agonies and problems which mature a century and a half later. This is why I say that for Tafuri the avant-garde is a historiographical metaphor: the underhandedly ambiguous, losing and creative line of artistic tradition over the last two centuries. The dissolution of languages accompanies the institutionalization of new practices (Olmstead’s planning, Wagner’s building process proposed anew in a significant unpublished essay, the politics of NEP in Stalin’s Russia).

Even in their apparent lack of homogeneity, the essays presented here restore this manifold and schizoid image of the evolution of languages and their institutionalization precisely at the moment in which politics (the science of the possible) makes them its own or perverts their nature. This is the most fecund point of Tafuri’s analysis: the radical analysis which is the exact opposite of the cosy inquiries which, for lack of a better term, I call post-Winkelmannian. The central point is the Weimar Republic. Tafuri avails himself of writings corroborated by a first-hand and precious philological apparatus and excellent illustrations. But this very writing—sometimes the reader, even if a specialist, is constrained to make difficult ascents along steep paths—conceals and reveals the greatest perils. One must ask if in such a linguistically shattered, confused moment, fraught with every kind of ambiguity, Tafuri’s text is not a classical assault on an open wound, if it is nothing more than bringing coals to Newcastle.

I am not looking for sweeteners, but I would also like to see this historical design, as Tafuri calls it in the introduction, directed toward an end. This end is quite clear in Tafuri: raze to the ground. And then? Maybe that architecture no longer builds? Is not then a design which makes a concrete fullness follow the abstract void necessary? Is it not more urgent than ever to reconstruct this lacerated discipline? These are the questions which mushroom in the wake of this lengthy pilgrimage through the crisis of architectural language, questions which demand an answer: and answers are provocatively and deliberately absent in this work. ●

—Cesare de’ Seta  
translated by Diane Ghirardo

Cesare de’ Seta is a Professor of Architecture and the History of Architecture at the University of Naples and the author of several books on architectural history.

**Thermal Delight in Architecture**  
by Lisa Heschong  
MIT Press, 1979, 78 pp., \$12.50

Warmth and comfort are as essential to life as water and air. Until the energy dilemma of recent years, we often took temperature control in our work and living spaces for granted. In response to heightened energy consciousness, the market has been glutted with how-to literature on energy economizing contraptions and ideas. But little has come forward concerning the effect changes in temperature planning will have on our social and spiritual lives.

Lisa Heschong’s *Thermal Delight in Architecture* addresses this question with a literate and lucid exploration of problem-solving in diverse cultures and climates. Heschong draws on poets, anthropologists, and travel writers as primary sources to argue for an environment of differentiated temper-



atures, as opposed to the obsessively controlled and neutralized architectural environments of today. For Heschong, architecture of unvarying temperature leads to as lackluster a life as a constant diet of lukewarm oatmeal. She asserts that to enjoy we need the stimulation of change and variety in temperature from warm to cold just as much as we need variety for the olfactory, aural and visual senses. The titles of the book's four chapters ("Necessity," "Delight," "Affection," and "Sacredness") reveal the author's poetic and spiritual attitude towards architecture, in which thermal qualities rank in importance beside such formal factors as light, space, movement, and visual form.

From the beginning, architecture served to preserve body heat. The harnessing of fire offered not only a practical source of heat, but also a social gathering point and mythical inspiration. The household hearth continued this primeval tradition until technology, through central heating, rendered it obsolete. Yet our continuing fascination with bonfires and candlelight demonstrates man's eternal connection with the primary element of fire.

Passive solar energy systems utilize many qualities found organically in vernacular architecture, such as Tunisian homes, which provide comfortable spaces through daily and seasonal temperature extremes. The central garden of these homes offers an oasis from the harsh desert climate while also approximating an earthly counterpart to the Koranic Eden. Heschong draws parallels between these Saharan gardens and California swimming pools, both of which provide social centers and refuges from heat. Although Heschong's analogy is thought provoking, her point is weakened because swimming pools are associated with the waste away from which her essays seek to discourage.

Most of her book, however, consists of simple and ingenious methods to cope with temperature extremes, and how different solutions affect social life. Architects have long sought a typology on which to base their formal judgements. While European Neo-Rationalists can draw on the historical precedent of the medieval city, with its low energy needs and human scale, Americans must find solutions for their own unique traditions and problems. A thermal typology provides such a new conceptual base on which to formulate planning. The beauty of Heschong's thesis is that it considers architecture in its most essential form: as shelter.

*Thermal Delight* offers the reader inspiration rather than a strict recipe for designing and planning. Heschong examines successful architecture by observing people's interactions with it. A place of thermal delight assumes a special significance in the minds of its users; rituals are performed before fires and inside cool mosques. Heschong reminds us that the best architecture—without the use of high technology—fuses aesthetic and functional needs to appeal to the sensual, social, and spiritual within us. ●

—John Gittlesohn

*John Gittelsohn graduated from Stanford University in 1980 and has since worked for Archetype.*

Continued from page 6

because one always had the sense that the panelists themselves were awash in a murky sea of inconsistencies and plain confusion as to what was expected of them. As they groped towards definition, so did we.

The symposium's chief problem is that it ended at the very point where it should have begun. The ground rules for the dialogue were just established when the talking stopped. Maybe it is in the nature of events like this that the real exchange occurs ex post facto when manuscripts fly back and forth as the publisher's deadline approaches. Nevertheless, as far as Seattle is concerned, if it is ever to have justifiable pride in itself as a center of learning, it will have to insure that future convocations of the Humanities transcend the stage of mere formal introduction. Until that occurs, we must continue to see these conferences for what they truly are—out of town trial-runs whose participants primping themselves for the Big Event somewhere else.

## Sixth Street Park

*Tom Cole*

Ever since the Egyptians conceived of the idea three thousand years ago, parks have served a variety of purposes. Parks have been used as promenades, places for recreation, escape and refuge. But it is doubtful that a park has ever been built expressly to serve the needs of indigents and inebriates.

The Glide Memorial Church, a hip and plushly endowed downtown worshipery, recently built such a park in San Francisco's grim South of Market Street area. Sixth Street Park (it is also called, with little irony, 'Drunk Park,' and some of its enthusiastic early habitués call it 'People's Park') is a green enclave in the midst of a jumble of played-out cafes, 20-hour bars, gloomy hotels and 6 a.m. 'plasma centers.'

Glide's philosophy stresses community involvement in its projects. So instead of investing in yet another food and sermon factory, the Church spent months in 1979 canvassing South of Market's residents to find out what they thought would brighten up the area's oppressive blight. When the idea of a park surfaced, Glide bought a disused 5,000 square foot lot at the corner of Sixth and Mission Streets, near Mission.

Fran Peavey, a Glide 'social designer,' was charged with designing a park that met the unique needs of the district's down and out citizens. A 'program' was clear from the beginning: the park should be easily accessible and it should provide places to sleep. As she talked with the park's potential users, Peavey also saw that the park had to be "visually accessible, open and inviting" (and so, she hopes, safe, as "people like to vamp on drunks in doorways"). Because forgotten cigarettes would be a constant hazard, Peavey chose expensive but fire-resistant redwood for the park's benches, which, incidentally, are built five inches deeper than normal "so people can just sort of fall onto them." The park's benches and tables were likewise built with

rounded edges, as the park's heaviest users often indeed would be falling down drunks.

Peavey believes "parks should be built for social change," so she designed the Sixth Street Park to nurture cohesiveness and self-help, along with a bit of pastoral gaiety. The benches were built in alcoves or around tables. A heavy-duty electrical outlet was installed to power live music, as well as the odd cassette player and television which float through the park. And a mural is planned for the park's 35-foot north wall: it will depict a forest, an apt consensus choice.

Because mechanical toilets would cause endless aggravation, the park has two sturdy outhouses (emptied regularly by a contracted firm, as are the solidly anchored waste bins). At night the park is lit by the 'warm light' of two sodium vapor lamps.

At first glance Sixth Street Park seems a fairly normal 'vest pocket park.' But at the back of the park are six galvanized steel tubes which distinguish it from more respectable 'promenades.' Each of these sewer pipes of seven feet lengths is fitted with a wooden pallet "about the width of a bed," in the delicate words of a Glide press release. Fran Peavey derived the idea of tube shelters from similar ones used during the Biafran Rebellion. "I didn't really know if people would sleep in them," she said. But they do. And the tubes have quickly taken on motley signs of habitation—blankets, bits of board and hanging clothes.

Peavey is happy to say that the park "breaks most park-building rules," and adds that it is above all experimental parks. Some of its design problems, however yet remain unsolved. For instance: How can more tubes be added to create a 'tube village'?; What material can replace the cold and expensive (\$700) tubes now in use?; How can the tubes' sharp edges be rounded for safety reasons since plastic cuffs have proved impractical?; Since easy entry and exit is necessary, what can be done to safely block the wind that now rushes through the open-ended tubes?; How can the park's fruit trees be protected and maintained (mature trees may replace the optimistically planted seedlings)?; and finally, How can shade be provided for the park without running afoul of city code requirements?

Glide purchased the lot on Sixth Street for about \$75,000. It spent that much building the park (free labor was provided by the California Conservation Corps, local groups and a few street people). Glide will provide park cleaning, and "social services and support," and estimates its yearly expenses at \$5,000.

Whatever the fate of Sixth Street Park (in its first few months it has been filled with activity and remains in good repair), it has an inescapable innovative charm. Those lessons learned in a park built for victims of social triage may one day, perhaps soon, be put to use in the traditional parks of San Francisco and throughout America.

## Silicon Valley Architecture?

Midway up the San Francisco Peninsula is an area which has earned the name 'Silicon Valley' because of the large number of computer component manufacturers who have built there. These immensely successful new corporations are in the process of creating a new architecture appropriate to their need for large flexible clean spaces and an environment conducive to worker composure and satisfaction. Many of the buildings are difficult to find and are unapproachable due to security measures. Nevertheless, Reyner Banham, in conjunction with a planned exhibition at the San Jose Museum of Art, "Architecture in the Silicon Valley," plans to study the situation and to write something succinct about it. We publish here a list (compiled by the Santa Clara Valley AIA) of the principle buildings so our readers can do some investigating on of their own.

1. Varian Associates Corporate Headquarters and Manufacturing Building  
By Mendelsohn & Gallis (1953)  
611 Hansen Way (at El Camino Real)  
Palo Alto
2. Alza Corporation Building  
By McCue, Boone, Tomsick (1970)  
950 Page Mill Road  
Palo Alto
3. Hewlett-Packard Electronics Manufacturers Main Offices Building  
By Clark, Stromquist, Potter & Ehrlich (c 1960)  
1501 Page Mill Road  
Palo Alto



Sixth Street Park "low-rent" rooms.

METRO/Robert Wallis



4. Xerox Research Center  
By Hellmuth, Obata & Kassenbaum (1975)  
3333 Coyote Hill Road  
Palo Alto
5. Syntex Corporation Building  
By McCue, Boone & Tomsick (1972)  
3401 Hillview Avenue  
Palo Alto
6. Fairchild Camera & Instrument Corporation Building  
By Simpson, Stratta & Associates (1968)  
464 Ellis Street  
Mountain View
7. Hewlett-Packard Electronics Manufacturers,  
Cupertino Campus  
By Ehrlich-Rominger (1971 to present)  
11000 Wolfe Road (at Homestead)
8. G.R.T. Corporation Building  
By Brown, McCurdy & Neary (1970)  
1265 Lawrence Station Road  
Sunnyvale
9. Dysan Corporation Building  
By Hill-Adams & Associates (1979)  
5440 Patrick Henry Drive  
Santa Clara
10. Tektronix, Inc. Building  
By Habitec (1979)  
3003 Bunker Hill Lane  
Santa Clara
11. Rolm Corporation Buildings  
By Cabak Associates (1977)  
4900 Old Ironsides Drive  
Santa Clara
12. Intel Fab 1A  
By Simpson Stratt & Associates  
3601 Juliette Lane  
Santa Clara
13. A.D.P. Corporation Building  
By Leason Pomeroy Associates  
3300 Olcott Street  
Santa Clara
14. Digital Equipment Corporation Building  
By Gensler Associates (1976)  
2525 Augustine Drive  
Santa Clara
15. ISS Sperry-Univac  
By King/Reif & Associates (1979)  
3333 Scott Boulevard (at Bowers)  
Santa Clara
16. Intel Corporation Main Building  
By Simpson, Stratta & Associates  
3065 Bowers Avenue  
Santa Clara
17. Wyle Distribution Group Building  
By Hawley & Peterson (1979)  
3000 Bowers Avenue  
Santa Clara
18. Memorex Corporation  
By King/Reif & Associates (1971)  
San Tomas Expressway at Central Expressway  
Santa Clara
19. Qume Corporation Building  
By Hawley & Peterson (1979)  
2350 Qume Drive  
San Jose
20. I.B.M. Corporation by Hellmuth, Obata & Kaseenbaum  
(c 1972)  
6450 Guadalupe Mines Road  
Los Gatos
21. I.B.M. Corporation, Santa Teresa  
By McCue, Boone & Tomsick  
555 Bailey Avenue  
San Jose

## RUMORS

### In the shadows

The post-modern extravaganza stood on wobbly feet in Venice, Italy, for the first time. Everybody in it liked it, everybody out of it hated it, and Massimo Scolari could not make up his mind, being in and out of it at the same time. . . Three Masters were honored, twenty future Masters got to build a facade, and about fifty Masters filled in the chinks. . . Rossi did the Gate and the carpenters of Rome's Cinecittà built it all. . . Victims of the Biennale: Christian Pozemparc, George Ranalli, Kenneth Frampton, Mario Botta, and Gino Valle. . . Portuguese is the first (self-proclaimed) Italian post-Modernist. . . Word has it that concrete shoes supplied by the New York Mafia await Rossi and Scolari for their unauthorized participation in the PM Biennale. . .

Elsewhere in New York, a sternly post-Modernist apartment was sold and the new owners commissioned a gravely post-Modernist to redesign it. . . With this turnover rate, it is probably fair to say that a pithy smithy will do the next remodelling.

Conflicting reports: Suzanne Stephens is taking over SKYLINE; *New York Magazine* is taking over SKYLINE; Suzanne Stephens is not taking over SKYLINE. Such fog frequently emanates from the West Forties, and we suspect that camouflage is not the purpose, but rather the fog itself, since it is well known that in some quarters atmosphere is more important than substance. . . Along similar lines,

Andrew McNair and Rem Koolhaas are working on a new magazine to be called *Metropolis*, while across the country Barbara Goldstein and Esther McCoy are planning a revival of *California Arts & Architecture*.

Elsewhere in the Eastern Subtraction, volunteers in Graves' office rush out to the Schulman house whenever a critic is on the loose to touch up the subtle ornaments, which may explain why Graves' Portland Courthouse is going through another face-lift. After the doghouse on the roof and the statue in the front were summarily dismissed, the tiles on the base are nearly gone and Michael is threatening to remove all color if he has to trim more fat. . . Cesar Pelli is still fabricating when he claims that he alone designed the entire MOMA. . .

With I.M. Pei doing the San Francisco Ferry Building, natives are wondering whether it will be an isocles or equilateral triangle hovering above the Embarcadero freeway. Even on the laid back California coast, natives are nervous about Eastern incursions, first Philip Johnson on Union Square and now Pei on the Bay. . . We think a Yale Collaborative could do a splendid job with a repertoire of shingle-esque skills on a Californization of the neo-classical City Hall and thence onward to the whole city, a wooded post-Modernism with Renaissance residues, all of which would blend well with the redwood hot tubs favored by Eastern visitors. . .

Wisdom from Gehry: the more famous you are, the less work you get. But at *Archetype's* first anniversary party, he landed one small SF job—still up in the air until the client recovers from Gehry's fees. . . Philip Johnson insists that Graves should take over IAUS. . . Once upon a time, Peter Blake built a house in the Hamptons. Along came Princess Lynn Stern and her consort Bob Stern. Lynn let Bob redo the house to the tune of lavish publicity. Then one day, Lynn and Bob got divorced. Lynn is about to sell the house back to Peter, who will erase all traces of Stern and return it to its presternian state. . . Will Colin Rowe take over for Vince Scully on Scully's sabbatical?

It seems the trustees of the new Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) in L.A. don't actually want Arthur Erickson and his group (including Tim Vreeland and Gruen) to design their museum as part of the competition-winning package. They are interviewing instead James Stirling, Arata Isozaki, Richard Meier, Ed Barnes, and Kevin Roche. With interesting building committee members like Coy Howard, it is a mystery that such a mundane crowd was short listed—and no locals. Again L.A. fiddles while architecture burns—Ed Ruscha's image of the L.A. County Museum ablaze demonstrates the affinity between art and life. ●



Architects Israel, Mack & Gehry at the Party.



Archetype Bread

### Archetype's Birthday Party

*Archetype* celebrated its first anniversary (1 May 1979) with a birthday party on August 16th at our new San Francisco offices. A special issue vintage wine, produced for the occasion by Robert Mondavi, with a label designed by Nancy Mayer and Pam Shaver, was drunk and sold at the jolly event. This limited edition wine is still available (see Ad).

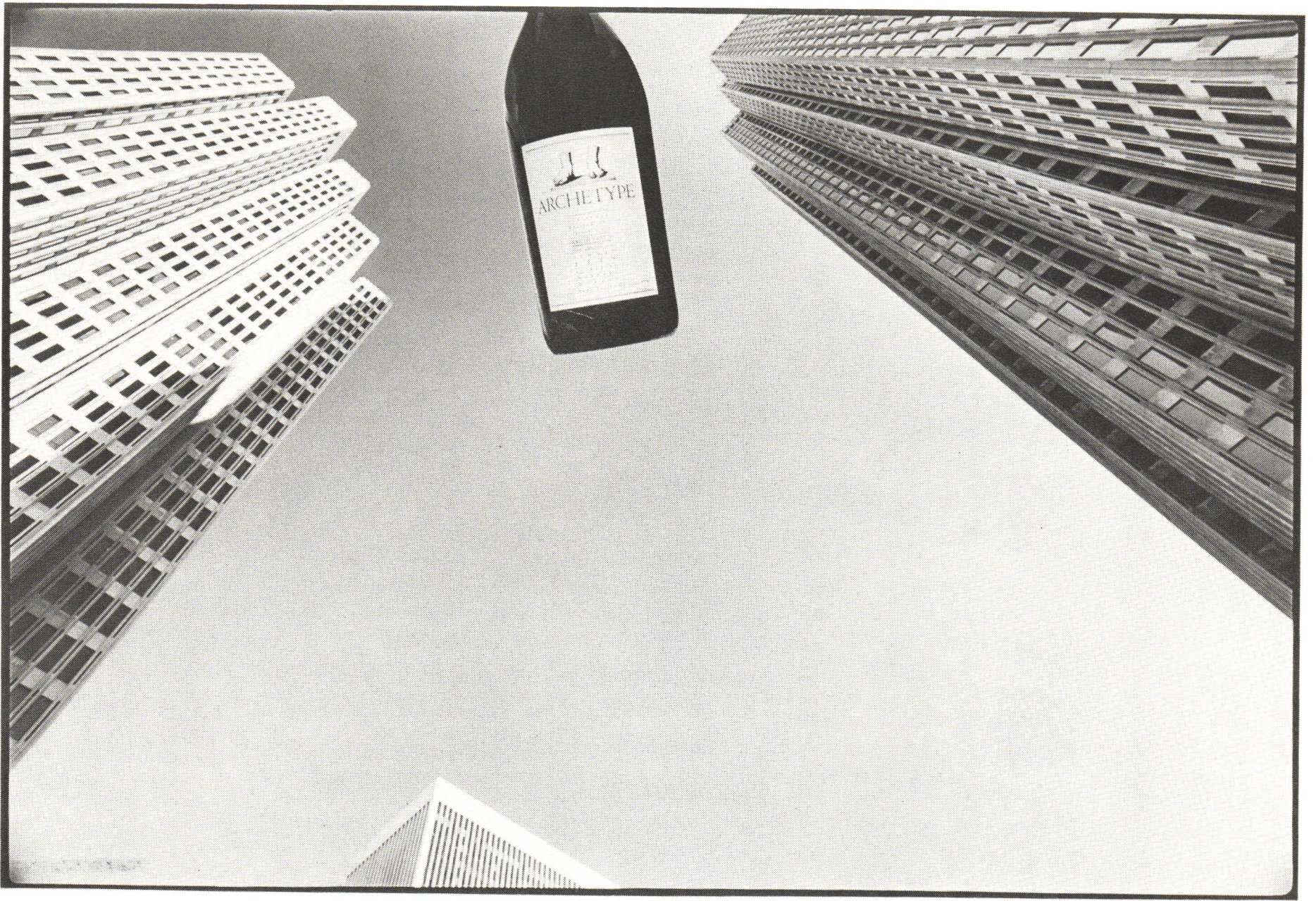
Among the notables present at the party were architect Gehry from L.A., artist Pichler from Austria, winemaker Mondavi from Yountville, and many famous San Franciscans (see pictures).



Mise-en-scene, 84 Vandewater



# Wine



CHARLY FRANKLIN

Bottled exclusively for *Archetype* by Robert Mondavi Winery, Oakville, Napa Valley, California this wine is available at our San Francisco office or by mail order.

Magnum, Vin rouge, \$25.00  
1/5, Vin blanc, \$6.00

(Add \$5.00 shipping charge for each bottle.)







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